WALTER DE WENLOK

ABBOT OF WESTMINSTER

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A CONTEMPORARY EFFIGY, PROBABLY OF WALTER DE WENLOK

Frontispiece

ECCLESIASTICAL BIOGRAPHIES

WALTER DE WENLOK

ABBOT OF WESTMINSTER

BY

ERNEST HAROLD PEARCE, Litt.D., F.S.A.

BISHOP OF WORCESTER

HONORARY FELLOW OF PETERHOUSE

SOMETIME CANON AND SUB-DEAN OF WESTMINSTER

WITH A FRONTISPIECE

LONDON

SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING

CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE

NEW YORK: THE MACMILLAN COMPANY

1920

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PRIORI ET CONUENTUI

BEATE MARIE VIRGINIS WIGORN:

MULTARUM HAUD IMMEMOR CURIALITATUM

D. D.

ADUENA WESTMON:

PREFACE

THE name of Walter de Wenlok is attached to a very large number of the Abbey muniments, and the organisation of the Convent's multifarious interests was never more methodical than during his reign. A monograph about his doings and about the conditions of the Monastery during his time might therefore run to a considerable length, and when I first took it in hand, I laid my plans accordingly.

But, first, the War brought administrative work that filled my days, so that the Abbot could be only the solace of my evenings. And then I was transplanted to what he would call the "partes occidentales," which he knew so well—Pershore and Longdon and Castle Morton and Wich and Malvern; with the result that all I could hope to do was just to make an end, and realise sadly that never again should I be able to write books based on unedited Westminster documents. I have lived with Wenlok so long that it is a real grief to send him away.

Since I left the Abbey, I have been kindly allowed by my dear friend, the Dean, to pay an occasional visit to the beloved Muniment Room, and have received much help from the Rev. H. F. Westlake, F.S.A., upon whom the mantle of Dr. Edward Scott has suitably fallen. But borrowing a key is not quite the same joy as using your own; and, if any leisure can be found amid the tasks that now fall upon me, I must devote it, say, to the doings of some Bishop of Worcester, a dignitary on whom Abbots of Westminster were apt to keep a shrewd, watchful eye.

ERNEST WORCESTER.

THE CASTLE,
HARTLEBURY,
Maundy Thursday, 1920.

CHAPTER I.

AN ELECTION AT WESTMINSTER.

In the *Flores Historiarum*[1] there stand side by side two records which may serve as a fitting introduction to our story, the more so as they refer to the year in which it opens. The first relates how on St. George's Day, in the year 1283, there passed away one John de Bradfield, Bishop of Rochester, to be succeeded by Thomas de Ynglestop or Inglethorpe, Dean of St. Paul's: and it proceeds to explain what an uncomfortable state of things then prevailed at Rochester between the Bishop and the monks. The Bishop appointed monks as officials in his household and conferred sergeancies to the disadvantage of the church; he also asserted his right to receive the dole or gift of St. Andrew.[2] This was resented by the Prior on behalf of the monks and was resisted to the extent of an appeal to the Archbishop of Canterbury, John Peckham, nothing loth, as a Franciscan, to find himself called upon for a ruling in this squabble of regulars. His Grace's reply was immediate and ominous. "Descendam et videbo,"[3] so he told the Prior, not at all unmindful that this was the phrase in which the Vulgate represents the Almighty's announcement to Abraham of an intention to examine the sinfulness of Sodom and Gomorrah. The Archbishop having assured the Rochester monks on his arrival that he came not as Metropolitan, to the prejudice of the Bishop

[1] Rolls Ser. III, 59 f.

[2] Exhennium sancti Andreæ. For exhennium cf. E. H. Pearce, *William de Colchester*, pp. 18, 62; and *Monks of Westminster*, pp. 21 f., 92 f.

[3] Gen. xviii. 21.

or the church, but as patron of the church, proceeded to question the brethren about their grievance, and decided that the right of the case lay with them rather than with the Bishop's officials. He summoned the Bishop and expressed to him the view that he was evil intreating the church of Rochester in siding with his officials and going counter to the wishes of the Prior and the senior brethren. "You do wrong, my lord," said the Archbishop. "My predecessors," the Bishop pleaded, "have done the like." But the Archbishop would accept no such plea; the thing would not be right, if an angel had done it; two blacks do not make a white.[1] So the Bishop went away, a wiser and a poorer man.[2] The chronicler of the *Flores Historiarum* has no prejudice against this Bishop; on the contrary, he sums him up[3] as praiseworthy, gentle and easy of address, merry and joyful and hospitable; and into the midst of these various attributes, which he borrows from Edmund of Hadenham,[4] inserts a statement that he was also "cultor Trinitatis".

But the chronicler, as a Westminster man, passes with evident satisfaction to the next and concluding item[5] in his record of the year 1283, which relates that "about St. Andrew's Day there died Richard de Ware Abbot of Westminster, treasurer of our lord the King; after whose decease, on the eve of the Circumcision, Brother Walter de Wenlac was unanimously elected in his stead by way of compromission". It is as if the chronicler would say: we manage things better at the Abbey, where there is no Bishop to trouble us, and we can go straight to the Pope for lack of justice without calling in his Grace of Canterbury. But it will be the effect of our present story to reveal that Westminster was by no means the home of ancient peace that the chronicler's contrast seems to imply

[1] "Quia satis succedit in vitium, qui alterius injuriam continuat et errorem."

[2] "Se retraxit, et saniori consilio adhaerere coepit."

[3] iii. 73. [4] *Anglia Sacra*, i. 353 (ed. 1691). [5] iii. 60.

and that it was liable to have to deal with the Archbishop. No doubt Walter de Wenlok's election was unanimous, but unanimity was seldom the mark of Abbey life under his rule. The times were unquiet and critical; we remember how Mr. J. R. Green takes this very year, 1283, with its completion of the conquest of Wales, as the text of a discourse on "the new England"[1] and on Edward's judicial, legislative and parliamentary developments. But our concern here is with a little company of religious, about fifty strong, situated hard by the administrative centre of these national changes, and still quarrelling and bickering about its own concerns, the Abbot and his particular friends in the House at serious cross-purposes with the Prior and his supporters. And the pity is that what we have to relate seems often to be so remote from the sacred and spiritual issues for which the Abbey stood, especially in troublous times. It appears almost as if the strong soul of the place were being smothered, first beneath the trivial details that are the staple of Abbot Ware's *Consuetudinary*, and then beneath the notarial warfare of Abbot Wenlok and his brethren.

We return, then, to the statement of the *Flores Historiarum*, that on 31 December, 1283, the unanimous election of Richard de Ware's successor took place. There is no mention of Walter de Wenlok in our muniments before that date.[2] The splendid system by which the names

[1] J. R. Green, *Short History of the English People*, ed. 1882, p. 163.

[2] This is true as regards the rolls of the obedientiaries, but since the *Monks of Westminster* was issued I have carefully examined the account rolls of a number of Abbey properties, and have found several references to Wenlok's activity in the oversight of the estates. The earliest is in a roll about Ashwell Manor, 1280-1 (*Mun.* 26252, 26253), where his name is given as W. Walnock. He received payments from Fering Manor, along with Adam de Wycumbe, 28 September, 1281—1 August, 1282 (*Mun.* 25581); and from Ashford Manor, 24 June, 1282—6 January, 1283 (*Mun.* 26660); while he and William de Watford are entered in the place usually occupied by the Convent Treasurers in an account of the Manor of Knightsbridge, June—September, 1283 (*Mun.* 16376). It is also recorded in *Mun.* 26660 that four bushels of corn were provided "in prebendis fratris J. de Sutton

of all our monks were recorded from the time of their profession onwards to their departure or decease was still a long way off.[1] But for the moment the State Papers come to our aid and fill some gaps in our own documents. They tell us,[2] first, that on 8 December, 1283, Malcolm de Harleye, the King's clerk, was appointed Warden or "Custos" of the Abbey of Westminster during the pleasure of the Crown. This means that the Court, being then at Leominster, had been informed by this date that the Abbacy was vacant; whereupon all the issues of the abbatial property fell as of right to the King, till such time as they should be restored by him after the due election and consecration of a successor. Now we remember that the *Flores* gave the date of Abbot Ware's death as being "circa festum sancti Andreae apostoli," and it is curious that a Westminster man should be in the uncertainty implied by that "circa". Another Westminster historian of a much later day, John Flete—he was a member of our foundation from 1420 to 1466[3]—states that Ware died on 8 December.[4] If so, the appointment of Malcolm de Harleye as "Custos" was antedated from the day on which the news reached the Court at Leominster to the day on which the death occurred. But the State Papers also tell us how the news came. For on 11 December, the King, being still at Leominster, issued his licence to the Prior and Convent to elect a new Abbot, by reason that there had come to him three chosen representatives of the House to convey the tidings of Ware's death. Leominster is distant some 140 miles from Westminster and, if Ware died on 8 December, the three monks lost no time on the road, and the Court scrivener made haste with his work in order to have the licence duly executed within three days.

et W. de Wenlok in generale capitulum de Radyng," 1282-3. Clearly he was already of importance in the business of the House.

[1] *Monks of Westminster*, p. 15, etc.

[2] Kal. Pat. Rolls, Edw. I, 1281-92, p. 107.

[3] Cf. *Monks of Westminster*, pp. 137 f.

[4] Flete, *History of Westminster Abbey*, ed. J. Armitage Robinson, p. 115.

There is a further item in the State Papers which implies that the date of death was earlier than 8 December, for on 9 December[1] a warrant was issued to Master Henry de Bray, escheator this side the Trent, to deliver to Robert de Dymmok, Abbot Ware's clerk, a sum of £50 that was found in his coffers after his death, in order that the expenses of the funeral may now be discharged and that payment may be made of the various gifts to his servants that were specified in his last will and testament. The issue of such a warrant is clearly more consistent with "about St. Andrew's Day" as the date of decease, than with 8 December, as given by Flete.

But our concern is with the three Westminster messengers on a journey to Leominster, of whom Walter de Wenlok was the third; the other two were William de Hanynton and John de Sutton; and if Walter, of whom thus far we know little, was of anything like equal status in the Convent with the other two, we can gather some reasons for his unanimous election. William de Hanynton, whose entry into the House cannot be dated, appears three years after this (1286) as the Sub-Prior;[2] that is to say, he was next in rank to the Prior and in all likelihood the senior of the monks. When Wenlok was made treasurer to Queen Alianore,[3] taking charge of her benefactions to the Abbey, he nominated John de Coleworth, the Prior, and Hanynton, the Sub-Prior, as his vicegerents in that office. The latter had probably filled many conventual posts before he rose to the dignity in which we now find him, but the survival of Abbey documents for the thirteenth century is not general enough to give us the details. We know much more of John de Sutton. His place-name was one that occurred frequently in the Monastery at this time, and in all likelihood there were three brethren who bore it among Abbot Ware's contem-

[1] Kal. Close Rolls, p. 247.
[2] *Monks of Westminster*, p. 59.
[3] *Mun.* 23629.

poraries. Geoffrey de Sutton,[1] who had served Abbot Crokesley, accepted in or about 1258, the year of Ware's election, the headship of the Priory of St. Mary, Hurley, an office always filled by one of our monks, which to his credit he resigned in 1267, being then, as he pleaded, "borne down with bodily infirmity, and weary by reason of old age". He would still be spoken of among the brethren as a Westminster monk, and was doubtless known to Brother John of the same name. Philip de Sutton,[2] the third of the trio, had been long enough in the Convent in 1272 to have the responsibility of holding manorial courts in the Abbey's Hertfordshire property, and he was much engaged upon the financial and administrative work of the Convent as Cellarer, Infirmarer, Treasurer and Monk-Bailiff. Incidentally he passed through the excitements of the robbery of the Treasury in 1303 and shared the general imprisonment in the Tower. But he lived to be senior monk in 1328-9, and, though we do not know how long before 1272 his profession took place, yet when he fades quietly out of the picture in 1328-9, we must think of him as being then not less than eighty years of age. But Brother John, the midmost of these three Suttons, was a more important factor in the conventual life than the others, and may well have been a serious rival to Walter de Wenlok when the election drew on. We come upon him first in 1260 when he was Monk-Bailiff,[3] an office of such trust that he must have been proved as a true monk for ten or twelve years before he could attain to it. He was equally in the confidence of Abbot Ware and of his successor. The former employed him as his proctor in law suits and in his monetary transactions with Sienese bankers in London, or, as we should say, with Lombard Street. It was he who was entrusted with the care of the abbatial treasures on Ware's death

[1] *Monks of Westminster*, p. 50; (cf. J. Armitage Robinson, *Gilbert Crispin*, p. 32 f.).

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 57.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 54.

and who handed them eight months later to Ware's successor when fully confirmed in his office. It was he whom Wenlok appointed as his plenipotentiary when he went across the seas in 1286.[1] The brethren held him in equal honour, for besides being Monk-Bailiff in earlier life, he was afterwards Chamberlain, and he twice held the important post of Sacrist. One other detail in his work should not be forgotten. In a chartulary which is not now forthcoming, but from which there is an extract in Stanley's *Memorials of Westminster Abbey*,[2] and also in a similar but not identical entry in our *Liber Niger Quaternus* (f. 92 *b.*), there is a record of those brethren who gave thought and money for the adornment of various chapels and details in King Henry III's great fabric. At the end of this list of benefactors stands "Frater Johannes Sutton," so much out of his right order that he is really the earliest of them all. The actual figure of his contribution is lacking, but what he did was to provide for the altar in St. Paul's Chapel a picture of the dedication of the Abbey Church with appropriate texts, and another picture for the altar-tomb of King Sebert.

The existence in our House of these three men of Sutton practically at the same time is a reminder of the method by which the Convent was recruited. For Sutton almost certainly refers to a manor in the Abbot's portion of the estates. Originally reckoned as part of the County of Gloucester, it subsequently passed to Warwickshire, where it was situated within the Hundred of Westminster.[3] Its full name is Sutton-under-Brailes and the properties allied with it were Todenham and Bourton-on-the-Hill, both Gloucestershire villages near Moreton-in-the-Marsh, which our documents generally call "Morton in Hennemers". The Abbot and

[1] Domesday f. 500: "Tenens locum Abbatis ipso Abbate in partibus transmarinis existente".

[2] 3rd edition, p. 641; cf. *Manuscripts of Westminster Abbey*, pp. 101 f.

[3] Having been for some time in the diocese of Gloucester, it has just been transferred to that of Coventry (*London Gazette*, 31 Oct., 1919).

Convent had market-rights at Moreton by royal charters from Henry III. One charter[1] gave Abbot Richard de Berking and his brethren the privilege of a fair there every Tuesday, of course with the usual restriction that the right must not be exercised to the annoyance of neighbouring fairs or to the detriment of local commerce.[2] This grant is dated 13 February, 1228; it was executed by Ralph de Neville, Bishop of Chichester and Lord Chancellor, and among the witnesses are Eustace de Fauconberge, Bishop of London, who died in the following October; Jocelin de Wells, Bishop of Bath and Wells; Richard Poor, Bishop of Sarum, who was mainly responsible for the erection of Salisbury Cathedral; Walter Mauclerk, Bishop of Carlisle, then the King's Treasurer; the Earls of Kent, Pembroke and Gloucester; and "William de Cantil," whom we may identify with the adherent of John and Henry III, who became the first Lord Cantelupe. The other grant[3] belongs to the days of Abbot Richard de Crokesley and bears date 21 January, 1253; it added, if it did not substitute for the other, the privilege of one fair at Moreton lasting six days in each year—on the vigil, the day, and the morrow of St. Matthew and three succeeding days, 20-25 September. The Convent's rights in this district included the advowson of Todenham, and we have a record[4] of Mauger, Bishop of Worcester, Richard I's Norman physician, admitting one Master Simon to this benefice on the presentation of Abbot Ralph de Arundel and the Convent.

But Sutton-under-Brailes was familiar to all Westminster monks as a part of this Gloucestershire estate and as a favourite residence of the Abbots when they went on

[1] Domesday, f. 322 *b*. The document is entered there as belonging to the time of Abbot Richard I, according to a custom which made the scribe write of Richard de Berking, Richard de Crokesley, and Richard de Ware, as Richard I, II, and III.

[2] "Nisi predicta feria et predictum mercatum fuerint ad nocumentum vicinarum feriarum et vicinorum mercatorum."

[3] Domesday, f. 323. [4] *Ibid.*, 324 *b*; no date, *c.* 1200-12.

their peregrinations through the various properties. Ever since the Abbacy of William Humez (or de Humeto), 1214-22, there had been a charge of twenty shillings yearly on the land then occupied by Robert Basset, in the vill of Sutton, with the object of providing a feast for the Convent on 9 June, the Feast of the Translation of St. Edmund, which this Abbot, out of his reverence for the saint, desired to be celebrated in copes.[1] Flete[2] states that the manor-house was built (he probably means rebuilt) by Abbot William de Curtlington (1315-33). Anyhow the Abbots were frequently there, and according to custom would choose the lads of promise in the village as recruits for the Convent. Hence these three de Suttons.

We may assume, then, that William de Hanynton, John de Sutton, and Walter de Wenlok, having concluded their mission to Edward I at Leominster, and obtained the royal permission to fill the vacant chair, returned to Westminster and laid the document before Prior Coleworth and the seniors. It would rest with them to settle the preliminaries of the election. Which of certain recognised processes should they adopt? There might be some brother who possessed the requisite qualities so obviously and beyond compare that there would be none to dispute his right to succeed Abbot Richard. If so, they could resort at once to election "per viam Spiritus sancti". In other words, they could say: It seems good to the Holy Ghost and to us that such a man should bear rule over us. This had come to pass at the election of Richard de Crokesley,[3] in 1246. But if there was likely to be any doubt, it was better, they would say, not to have a divided vote, with, perhaps, several candidates, and with the Convent thus split up into the parties that sided with each; and the alternative was election by compromission, "per viam compromissi," a plan much favoured at many times from Richard de Ware's election as Abbot, in December, 1258,

[1] Domesday, f. 120 *b*.
[2] p. 123, *Mun.* 32354.
[3] *Flete*, p. 108.

to Thomas Jaye's election as Prior, in May, 1528.[1] It meant that five, seven, or more monks were chosen from the whole body, but, as was natural, mainly from the seniors, to decide upon one name and to present it to the Convent for acceptance. Thus, if any canvassing was on foot, it was confined within narrow limits, and in practice the congregation had its doubts settled for it. In this case we do not know the names of the select jury, save that one was Richard de Waltham, and we know that he had six colleagues,[2] but it is reasonable to conclude that Hanynton, John de Sutton, and Wenlok himself were among them; for Richard de Kedyngton, who followed Wenlok, and was elected by the same process, was also one of the seven electors at his own election,[3] and so was Thomas Jaye, when he became Prior.

We have no complete lists of our monastic establishment at this time, and the names which we possess owe their survival to the chance of their appearing upon some business record. But we can put together a company of twenty-one, including the Prior, John de Coleworth, who, as he was Sacrist in 1278, had not held his present office for many years. The other twenty were John de Sutton, already mentioned; Jordan de Wratting, afterwards Sub-Prior; William de Huntyndon, afterwards Prior; Richard de Waltham, one of the seven original electors; William de Pharindon, who may be taken as the Precentor of the period of the *Consuetudinary*; Richard de Fanelore, who was one of the monks chosen to elect Wenlok's successor; Richard de Kedyngton or de Sudbury; Gilbert Rauel, who perhaps came from Raveley in Huntingdonshire; Roger de Waleden; Philip de Sutton; Robert de Sancto Martino; John de Wodeham; Adam de Wycumbe, who was probably Archdeacon at the time; Henry de London; Robert de Bures, one of the men whom the new Abbot took with him when he started for Rome and whom he subsequently

[1] The method is described in *Monks of Westminster*, p. 178.
[2] Kal. Pap. Reg., i. 472.
[3] *Monks of Westminster*, p. 73.

alienated from him; William de Hanynton, already mentioned as a messenger of the Convent to the King; Alexander de Neuport; Henry de Waleden; and, though we have no mention of them in 1283, but only a fair presumption that they were then fully professed, Alexander de Persore, Simon de Gardino, Adam de Lyminstre and Robert de Parham.[1] Thus, though we have no list, we can recall the personalities of rather less than half the electorate, of which forty-eight may be taken as the probable total.

Fortified, then, by the royal licence to elect, this company of religious met in the Chapter House on the last day of the year 1283 to elect an Abbot; they decided to proceed by way of compromission; they chose their special jury of seven; and they accepted the resulting choice of Walter de Wenlok as their Abbot.

We have no actual record of our own about the proceedings in this particular election, but we shall not go far astray if we imagine our monks proceeding on the lines followed by their Canterbury brethren in 1309.[2] On the appointed day all and singular the members of the House capable of taking part were called together. The Mass of the Holy Spirit was celebrated and His grace invoked upon the task in hand. The appropriate part of

[1] Cf. the careers of all these as given in *The Monks of Westminster*, pp. 54-63. An examination of the annual compoti of various manors, chiefly in the Convent's portion, has recently yielded the names of several additional members of the Chapter which met as above: Walter de Walloc or Wallop, who helped to carry the Virgin's Girdle to some expectant lady in 1279-80 (*Mun.* 26657) and whose name may even be a disguise for Walter de Wenlok himself; John de Brakele, who was Granger in 1280-1 (*Mun.* 26252); Geoffrey de Worcester, who held the same office in the following year (*Mun.* 16375); Ralph de Basing, 1281-2, and P. de Warham, 1284-5, mentioned on rolls of Ashford Manor (*Mun.* 26657, 26662); Adam de Stratton, 1281-2, and Walter de Wingham, 1283-4, engaged at Aldenham Manor (*Mun.* 26019, 26022); and John de Wokendon, at Feering Manor, 1284-5 (*Mun.* 25584). These eight are near enough in date to be added to the electoral roll of Wenlok's congregation.

[2] *Customary*, i. 19 ff.

the Benedictine constitutions was read and Prior Coleworth made proclamation that if any member of the House—"quod non credimus"—was under interdict or excommunication his vote was invalid and must not be counted. Having decided, as already explained, to proceed by way of compromission, they made choice of seven electors, who then stood up to receive their charge in some such words as these:—

> In the name of God, Amen. We charge you in the name of the Holy Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and by your holy profession and the vows of obedience which you made in this church, and by the sacred Body of our Lord Jesus Christ which is here before you, and by all the holy relics of this church, and by God's holy Gospels, that you choose for us from among yourselves or from the other members of this congregation to be our Abbot and shepherd a brother who in your judgment is devoted to God, profitable to the community of this congregation and of good will, useful to the well-being of this church and requisite for the maintenance of the religious life; and you will not pass over any man through hatred, malice or envy, nor because of anything in any way said or done to the displeasure of yourselves or your brethren. You will not choose any one because of his friendship or relationship to you or through partiality or out of regard to any advantage conferred or expected to be conferred upon you or your brethren, but such an one only as has the wit, the power, and the will to love his brethren in the fear of God and to uphold the well-being and the good customs of this church in the form prescribed to the best of his power. So help you God and God's holy Gospels. Go, and God be with you, and have Him before your eyes, as you care for your soul.

But something was needed of a more binding character

in law than this solemn exhortation. Therefore, the seven next received from the Prior a parchment duly executed and sealed with the conventual seal, which was their authority to proceed with their responsible task. This document recited the death of the late Abbot, fixed the day for the election of his successor, gave the names of the seven "compromissaries," as they were called, and undertook that the Convent would acquiesce in the choice which they, or the majority of them, should thus make. Receiving this warrant, they retired and conducted their careful deliberations apart by themselves. When they had come to a decision, it was announced in due form to the congregation of the House in Chapter assembled. The Prior and Convent accepted it, as they had promised, and asked the Elect to signify his consent to the appointment, which he did, with whatever hesitation. Thereupon they conducted him to the High Altar, singing *Te Deum*, while the bells clanged in the tower. The Prior then announced the election to the people in the church and the Elect was escorted to the Prior's chamber; for he was still only the Elect. There was much to be done before he could regard himself as Abbot.[1]

With all speed, accompanied by two or three members of the Convent chosen for the purpose, the Elect presented himself to the King, and these brethren took with them a letter supplicating his Majesty to receive him graciously and to signify to the Monastery his royal sanction and approval of their choice. On their return the party brought with them a letter which the King had written to the Pope asking his Holiness to receive the Elect and then to speed him on his return to his House.

[1] For the restrictions imposed on an Abbot-elect at Westminster, see *Customary*, II, 6-9.

CHAPTER II.

TO ROME FOR CONFIRMATION.

THE Convent has now done almost all that it can to give effect to its choice of Walter de Wenlok as Abbot of Westminster. The next step lies with the Roman See, to which the House is immediately subject, but that step is costly. In the first place, the Elect needed the King's permission to leave the country on such an errand, and this was made sure on 22 January, 1284, when the Crown, being then at Clipstone, granted a safe-conduct to the Abbot-elect of Westminister, who was going to Rome on his own affairs.[1] Now, it is just this question of expense which brings us to our second item of evidence for this journey, an item which is, in fact, the earliest Abbey document[2] that records the name of Walter de Wenlok, after his election as Abbot. It is a bond dated 11 February, 1284, for the repayment of money raised by the Convent to back their choice before the Roman Court. Wenlok, as we shall learn, had already started for Rome and was actually crossing the Channel on the date borne by the bond. That document was executed at the New Temple before Giffredus de Vesano, canon of Cambrai, clerk of the Chamber to Pope Martin IV, and at that time Nuncio of his Holiness in England. On the one side of this worthy's presence there stands one Bartolomeo Marchi, the representative of a banking firm of Sienese merchants; the firm was known as Bonsignori & Co.[3] and among the partners were Jacopo Brabanzon, Bonaventura Bernardini and Ranucyo Balchi. On the other side stands Brother

[1] Kal. Pat. Rolls. [2] *Mun.* 12878. [3] "Societas Bonseynur'."

Simon de Gardino, monk and Proctor of the Prior and Convent of St. Peter, Westminster, near London. Simon of the Garden—it is quite likely that he came into our House from the purlieus of Long Acre—was not a prominent member of the society,[1] and his name was inserted into the document before us after all the rest of it had been written by someone else. We must be content to say of him that he was involved in the trouble that arose between the Abbey and John Peckham, Archbishop of Canterbury, about W. de Pershore, the apostate Franciscan friar, and that for whatever part he took in that quarrel he was absolved in July, 1291.[2] He was under the care of the Infirmarer for the more part of the year ending Michælmas, 1306[3]; he needed little medicine and what he had cost just 8½d.; if we possessed the Infirmary roll of 1306-7, we might know when he died.

But here he was in 1284, chosen by the Convent to be their hostage for the repayment of 250 marks which the Sienese bankers had lent them. The money was needed in order to expedite certain important and difficult business, and especially for the pressing necessities arising out of the election of that "venerable man, my lord Walter de Wenlok," Abbot-elect of their monastery, who must proceed to the Roman Court to obtain confirmation in his office. The Prior, the Sub-Prior, the Archdeacon, the Sacrist, the Cellarer and the Precentor were all ready to incur the penalties of excommunication if there should be any default in the periodical repayments.

It is clear, then, that they raised some of the funds necessary for so serious an ordeal, and we may assume that they had also provided the Elect with the documents that were requisite for his success when he should reach the sacred city. What these documents were we can see by a reference once more to the election at St. Augustine's, Canterbury, in 1309.[4] First, they drew up a "decretum"

[1] See his record in *Monks of Westminister*, p. 62.
[2] *Mun.* 6391. [3] *Mun.* 19319. [4] *Customary*, I, 25 ff.

setting forth all the facts and bearing the common seal and the subscription of each member of the House; therewith they sent a covering letter to the Pope, asking him to confirm the election and to bestow benediction upon the Elect. The brethren who accompanied him to Rome were provided with a letter of procuration addressed to the Curia; and, to make all sure, they carried the following documents, all duly executed: the King's licence to elect; the sealed letters appointing a day for the election; others signifying the decision to proceed by way of compromission and naming the compromissaries; the petition to the Pope, just referred to, with the "decretum"; the King's letter to the Pope; and also these instruments: one about the process of election; one containing the protestation that no brother then under ecclesiastical penalties was allowed to vote (this was only to be displayed in the Curia, in case any corresponding objection was raised); and one stating the day on which the Elect and his supporters set out for Rome.

Altogether it was no light matter to become thus armed at all points against the many possibilities of attack that any one desiring to be confirmed in office by the Roman Court had to be prepared for alike from the insidious and the rapacious. If any of these parchments should be lost on the road, great delay or greater expense would result. We therefore turn now to the journey itself, which our documents help us to do.

For it is clearly described for us in the account-roll of its costs.[1] As the season was not much past mid-winter, and the Alps were to be crossed, there was much buying of warm clothing, and the first item was a payment of 31s. 3½d. to John de Eya—no doubt some clothier in the neighbourhood of the Abbot's property near Westminster called Eye or Eyte or "Insula"—"pro collobiis et tunicis". The party set out on 7 February, the Monday after

[1] *Mun.* 9241. Expense Walteri de Wenlok electi Westmoñ erga Curiam Romanam Anno Regni Regis E. duo decimo.

the Feast of St. Agatha, Virgin and Martyr, and their first stage brought them to "Wykham," which we may assume to be West Wickham just beyond Croydon. They were in no hurry; for they halted there for two nights, and bought a horse from one William de Ware for 4 marks.[1] These initial outlays were made by Brother Robert of Bures, an active and useful monk, then under thirty years of age,[2] but it is not clear that he accompanied them any further. They were now a cavalcade of sixteen horses, and pressed on steadily, reaching Rochester on Thursday, Canterbury on Friday, and Dover on Saturday. We may note that their day's maintenance in Canterbury cost them 13s. 9½d., not omitting "Item in elemosina per viam 1d.". At Dover we have mention of Alexander de Persore, for he and the Elect were two of the five who needed to have their harness repaired at a total outlay of 1s. 1d. But Dover was also their port of embarkation, and we find them paying 21s. for the hire of a ship to take them over to "Witsond," or Wissant, which lies on a bay between Cap Gris Nez and Calais. They were now a party of thirty-two men, two pack-horses and a dozen other horses; it cost 3s. 6¼d. to get the animals aboard at Dover and to disembark them on the French side, and the duty paid for the men, the pack-horses, and the luggage, amounted to 6s. 6d., the entire expense of the transit coming to 36s. 11d., or rather more than one shilling a head per man.

Thenceforward we can follow them steadily day by day and from place to place as far as Perugia, where the account breaks off. They reached Paris in six stages—Boulogne, Mostroil, St. Riquier, Poix, Beauvais, Beaumont, and St. Denis—on Friday, 18 February. The only point of time in the account is the statement that they were at Bar-sur-Seine "in die Cinerum," three days south of

[1] £2 13s. 4d.; nearly a century later, 1377, William de Colchester's horse, with a saddle, cost only 34s. 8d.; cf. E. H. Pearce, *William de Colchester*, p. 33.

[2] Cf. *Monks of Westminster*, p. 58 f.

Paris; and as Ash Wednesday in 1284 fell on 22 February, we are able to date their course throughout. But since there is a wonderful care and uniformity about their expenditure at each stage, we may stop at this point to notice the system of providing for their needs. It may be taken that the average cost of their daily maintenance was about 13s.; for they are careful to enter the sterling value of the French money. Thus at Montreuil the account says: "summa xlvjs. ixd. Paris'. Et valent xiijs. iiijd. stg.". The items, which are given in French coinage, keep the even tenour of their daily way, about 2s. for bread, about 5s. for wine; 5s. to 7s. for beef, pork, and mutton, three fowls at 7d. each, one "Wytecoc" for 2d., and sixpennyworth of eggs. The daily bill remained at about the same figure on fish-days, when ling, and pikerell, and eels and congre, and tench, and trout took the place of the meat course, where they could be obtained. They replenished their cruet from day to day with small quantities of mustard, salt, pepper, "oleum de nucibus," and the like. Their next care was fuel for the kitchen and candles for the evening, then hay and oats for the horses, then a visit to the blacksmith and the harness-maker for repairs; and finally a small payment, generally 2d., for stabling. Taking a day's charges as normally 13s. 4d., and remembering that the cavalcade was thirty-two strong, we get an average cost of fivepence a head. The halt in Paris on 19 February meant an expenditure of 20s. 8d., but this was due, not to any luxury, for their salmon at 4s. cost no more than the ordinary fare, but to the greater facility for shopping in the capital; for they bought six ells of "kaneuas" for 4s. and paid a tailor eighteenpence for making it into a garment. Moreover, at this point we come for the first time upon an "extra" which recurs at fairly regular intervals hereafter:[1] "Item in lauatura pannorum ijs.". Travelling was grimy work and our monks were no advocates of dirt for its

[1] On 3 March, at St. Maurice; on 10 March between Milan and Cremona; on 15 March, at "Bonkastel," the next stage after Bologna.

own sake; so, as opportunity offered, they effected a goodly cleansing of their entire "kit"; not merely their underclothing, but the *panni*, which was the word they applied to the Benedictine habit of black cloth. The charge of 2s., or in one case 2s. 6d.—"pro lauatura pannorum famulorum"—represents the local coinage and not sterling money, but even so it was a not inconsiderable sum. A merciful man is merciful to his beast as well as to his own comfort, and at the stage between Milan and Cremona, which the roll calls Lauda and which was no doubt the modern Lodi, the cost of the clothes-washing and the cost of "litera pro equis" were alike fourpence.

The journey itself was apparently uneventful, but it was at least a testimony to the endurance alike of men and horses, and the frequent charges for the mending of shoe-leather imply that there was rough walking for some of them; for example, at Brieg, with the "passagium montis" just in front of them, there is a prudent payment of xxs. sterling ,"xv garcionibus pro emendacione sotularium". I reckon, then, that the continental part of their journey from Wissant to Perugia occupied thirty-eight days, and there is mention of fifty-four halting-places. It will be sufficient, without mentioning each stage, to say that it took them through Dijon, Dole, Salins, Pontarlier, Lausanne, St. Maurice, Sion, Brieg, the Simplon, "pro passagio montis," Como, Milan, Cremona, Reggio, Modena, Bologna, Florence, Cortona and Perugia. For nearly five weeks they pushed on without staying more than one night in the same place. At last, having reached Arezzo on Saturday, 18 March, they halted there over Sunday; the reason is perhaps to be found not in their weariness but in the need to prepare the way for their arrival in Rome; for on that Sunday the account enters xxxvis. "pro quodam equo ad opus magistri P."—probably some ecclesiastical jurist in the company, who must press on for the preliminary negotiations with the Curia. Even so, the lawyer was not their first *avant-courier*, for at Piacenza

there had been a payment of xiiijd., "Roberto cursori pro expensis erga Curiam et sotularibus"; evidently, being of less account or of sterner stuff than the lawyer, Robert went afoot. Unfortunately the roll ends before we can realise what either of the messengers accomplished.

Nor is it possible to say much as to the conventual company that endured this hard travelling as the escort of the Elect. Brother Robert de Bures, as we have seen, was with them when they journeyed through Kent; but there is no sign that he crossed the Channel. In his case the entry omits to describe him as "Frater," to which he was certainly entitled. The only person to whom the title of "Frater" is given in the roll is Alexander de Persore,[1] whose name occurs frequently in our story, and who may be reckoned to be one of the Convent's Proctors to the Curia. This is the first reference to him that I have found in the Muniments, and, as he attained to the important office of Sacrist four years later, it is fair to assume that in 1284 he had been a member of our House for some years; we do not as a rule find a monk reaching that office at less than ten years from his ordination. Alexander is remarkable, like William de Colchester after him,[2] for having made at least three journeys to the Holy City—the one with which we are now dealing; a second in 1291, when he was sent by the Abbot to act as his Proctor at the Curia in the interminable proceedings about Alexander's fellow-townsman, the apostate Franciscan, William of Pershore; the third in 1298, with what special object we do not know, though we are aware of a pathetic incident connected with it. For he then obtained, at a price which the Abbot may have helped him to defray, an indulgence of forty days to all who prayed for his well-being in this life and for his soul after his death, and for the soul of Brother Thomas de Lenton, whose body already

[1] Cf. *Monks of Westminster*, p. 62.
[2] Cf. *William de Colchester*, 32 ff., 40.

lay in the monks' cemetery at the Abbey.[1] There is evidence here of a conventual friendship, maintained round the Abbot's person.[2] For in 1289 Brother Alexander was Warden of the Abbot's household or hospice,[3] and Brother Thomas was his lordship's Seneschal or steward. The first of the many letters of Walter de Wenlok still surviving, dated on the Feast of the Annunciation, 1286, contains a precept to deliver half a quarter of wheat to Brother Thomas de Lenton for the wage of a workman engaged on the repair of the walls, i.e. the river-side embankment.[4] As Lenton fades away out of the Abbot's official correspondence after 3 May, 1292, we have a presumption of his early death, and we can realise Alexander de Persore's affection for his friend's memory, when we find him some six years later petitioning the Pope, Boniface VIII, for an indulgence for those who pray for his friend's soul.

Brother Alexander, then, is the only monk stated to have been in attendance upon the Elect during his arduous journey, though probably another Proctor was sent with him. The other persons named in the roll are few in number. At Dover P. de Warham[5] and R. de Kingestone were sent on ahead to prepare for the arrival of the party on the French coast. At Poix the same thing happened to Kingestone and a man entered simply as W. At Salins a payment of 3s. was made to one Adam of Hereford "infirmo remanenti"; it must be presumed that either he caught up the cavalcade on his recovery or he proceeded homeward at the expense of the benevolent. The "marescallus," we find, was called Ralph, and we have seen that the company included Magister P. Robert the Runner may have been hired locally, as was Lambertus de Mediolana, who was paid xxs. "pro conductu suo". But we

[1] A notification of this indulgence from fourteen Archbishops and Bishops, dated at Rome, 18 July, 1298, is written in Domesday, f. 403.

[2] *Mun.* 24497, 31275-7, 31513.

[3] "Custos Hospicii Abbatis."

[4] *Mun.* 31271.

[5] Almost certainly a monk, but not so called in the compotus.

have thus discovered six of the Elect's companions, and as we know that there were fifteen "garciones," we can account for twenty-two of the thirty-two who crossed the Channel.

Wenlok's place of residence in Italy was, of course, decided by the movements of the Papal Curia and in May, 1284, the Pope was at Orvieto, where the Abbot must needs take a house, and we know from the bonds[1] given for the money which he was then obliged to borrow that Brother Richard de Waltham was of this Orvieto household, as well as Adam de Phyleby, Archdeacon of Salop, and Master John of Ludgershall. Therefore we ought to reckon these three among his companions in travel on the outward journey; but Adam de Phyleby, who returned home by August, was again acting as his Proctor at the Roman Court in November "pro arduis ecclesie sue de Westmon' negociis expediendis".[2]

Two immediate results of the journey may be briefly noted here. On 7 May, 1284, Pope Martin IV, being then at Orvieto, granted Walter, the Abbot, and the Convent of Westminster a Bull confirming in common form all liberties and immunities bestowed by the Pope's predecessors upon the Abbey by means of bulls or other indulgences, as well as all liberties and exemptions from secular exactions given by kings and princes and others of the faithful in Christ.[3] On the following day the Pope, having confirmed Walter de Wenlok's election as Abbot, ordered the Bishop of Ostia to give him the benefit of benediction.[4] With that accomplished, his elevation to the chair of Richard de Ware was complete, and he could return to Westminster.

[1] *Mun.* 12879, etc.

[2] *Mun.* 9436; 9467.

[3] The Bull is entered in Domesday, f. 25.

[4] Kal. Pap. Reg., i. 472.

CHAPTER III.

THE ABBOT'S RIGHTS.

WALTER de Wenlok left Rome as Abbot of Westminster in full right during May, 1284, and reached London before the end of June. His first concern was with his estates, which had been in the hands of Malcolm de Harleye on the King's behalf since 8 December, 1283, and we find that on 20 June, 1284, Edward I, being then in Wales, where his son Edward had been born on 25 April, issued a mandate to Malcolm de Harleye to restore the temporalities to Walter de Wenlok, now that the Pope had confirmed his election.[1] We possess also a parchment[2] which shows us the same Malcolm on the Monday before St. Bartholomew's Day (24 August) handing over to the new Abbot the store of silver plate which belonged to his office, in the presence of Brother John de Sutton, Brother Richard de Waltham, Master Adam de Fylyby, and one Peter a clerk. There were fifty-five pieces in the collection, most of them silver-gilt and many of them with covers to match—cups, goblets, ewers, dishes, plates and salt-cellars. Malcolm de Harleye necessarily took some time before he could render an account of his stewardship of the estates, but the order for his discharge on the completion of his functions was issued on 6 November.[3]

One advantage the King had during the interregnum, namely, that the benefice of St. Margaret "prope Piscariam" fell vacant shortly after Richard de Ware's death, and, as the Abbots nominated to Abbey advowsons, the

[1] Kal. Pat. Rolls, Ed. I, 1281-92, p. 124.
[2] *Mun.* 9467 (see p. 44).
[3] Kal. Close Rolls, 1284, p. 282.

right, being part of their portion, fell to the Crown, "sede vacante". Edward was at no loss to find a clerk speedily, and the King's presentation of Hugh de Hormede, chaplain, was dated at Nettleham in Lincolnshire, 8 February, 1284, at the moment when Wenlok was passing through Kent on his way to the coast and thence Romewards (Kal. Pat. Rolls, p. 112).

The question of the rights of the Crown over Abbey property during a vacancy was of naturally frequent recurrence. But, if we are to trust Matthew Paris, the matter had become acute under Richard de Crokesley, who, as we shall see later, was particularly fractious about the Abbey compositions. On the one side we have Matthew Paris [1] stating that Henry's charter granting to the Prior and Convent free administration of their portion during a vacancy was given to them on the King's initiative, which seems to imply that it was given also in despite of the Abbot, and as a sign of the King's displeasure towards him. On the other we have the later tradition embodied in Flete's History [2] that the Abbot himself obtained the grant from Henry III. All we can be sure of is the actual charters of which we have record: one was issued at St. Edmundsbury, 6 September, 1252 [3]; another is a precept, also of Henry III, to the same effect (dated at Westminster 18 March, 1255, and witnessed by John Mansel, Provost of Beverley, among others), of which there was an "inspeximus" in Richard de Ware's time, 29 November, 1280.[4] But it is evident that on Walter de Wenlok's advent to full authority the question was again investigated with some care. Four weeks after restoring the temporalities Edward I issued to the Treasurer and Barons of the Exchequer a mandate,[5] dated at Carnarvon

[1] Matt. Par. Rolls Series, III, 322; "rege procurante".

[2] p. 110. [3] Domesday, f. 60; Flete, p. 110.

[4] At the same time, after "inspeximus," Edward I confirmed his father's grants to the Abbey about amercements, fines from their own men, and return of the king's writs in their own lands, and free warren. Domesday, 69 b., 70.

[5] Domesday, f. 71.

18 July, 1284, that they were to make search among the Exchequer rolls as to the liberties and rights allowed to the chief Abbeys in the Realm; he wanted, he said, to be assured on this point before granting and confirming to the Abbot and Convent of Westminster such liberties as may be expedient. The result of this is to be seen in Edward I's grant to the Abbot and Convent issued at Westminster, 18 February, 1286, which we possess in triplicate. It is given by itself in *Mun.* 1577; Reginald de Hadham caused his notary, Peter of St. James's, to make a certified copy[1] of it on 29 December, 1307, for Edward I was then dead and so, four days before, was Walter de Wenlok himself; the third copy is in the great chartulary.[2] Its provisions, therefore, are worth our notice. "It has been our custom," says the King, "and that of our predecessors on the throne, on a vacancy arising through the death of an Abbot of the Church of St. Peter, Westminster, to lay hands upon the deceased's corn in the granges, sheep, oxen, horses, saddle-horses and other animals, silver vessels, jewels, books, treasure, and such like, to the grievous injury of the said church and of future Abbots. But now, out of reverence for St. Peter, the spiritual patron of the said church, and for Edward the King, and on behalf of the good of the souls of our father King Henry and of our children[3] whose mortal remains rest in the church, and of our mother and our wife, and our ancestors and our heirs; and also because of our desire that this church should be as free as any other in our Realm; we do grant to Walter, the present Abbot, and to his successors, that we will cease so to do. Henceforward all these goods, instead of being turned to our advantage, shall redound to the profit of the said

[1] *Mun.* 5438, endorsed: "Carta Regis E. de bonis mobilibus pertinencibus ad porcionem Abbatis non capiendis tempore vacacionis ad opus dicti regis et successorum suorum." (For the text see p. 44 f.)

[2] Domesday, f. 71; cf. Kal. Pat. Rolls, Ed. I, 1281-92, p. 222.

[3] For Edward's children buried in the church, cf. E. T. Murray Smith, *Roll-Call of Westminster Abbey*, p. 22.

church and of the incoming Abbot. At the same time we reserve to ourselves and our successors the issues arising during the vacancy from the Abbot's portion in the same way as we are accustomed and constrained to do when other Abbacies and Priories fall vacant."

One other grant is so near to this in date, and meant so much to Abbot Wenlok in particular, that it had better be mentioned as a probable result of his activities at this time. On 12 February, 1286, the King, being then in his favourite retreat of "Hauering atte Boure," near Romford, issued a mandate to all toll-gatherers that the Abbot of Westminster and his men should be exempt from any toll levied in the port of Dover, on crossing the sea, inasmuch as charters had been issued by previous sovereigns freeing the Abbot and Convent from all toll on crossing the sea, at bridges and on waters and roads throughout the Kingdom.[1] Nevertheless, as we have already seen,[2] our Abbot was charged 6s. 6d. for toll when he started for Rome; perhaps he paid under protest and made a mental note to raise the question on his return. When he crossed the Channel after his French sojourn in 1291 he paid only 2s. 2d. "pro custuma et portagio".

Having thus been confirmed in the rights which he and his Convent enjoyed at the hands of the Crown, the Abbot would naturally have an eye to those which were claimed by the Abbey in its relation to the English Church and in particular to the English Episcopate. It is not necessary here to trace all the steps by which the Abbey obtained its highly-prized official description of "Conuentus Westmonasterii Londoniensis dioceseos ad Romanam ecclesiam nullo medio pertinens," but in Walter de Wenlok's day the settlement of the question was so recent that something should be said about it at this point. The important date in the controversy is 1222, the closing year in the life of William Humez, the last of our Norman Abbots, when, as the result of an examination of various charters, genuine

[1] Domesday, f. 71 *b*.

[2] See p. 17.

and doubtful, by Archbishops and other referees, the Abbey was decided to be exempt from episcopal control, and Eustace de Fauconberg, Bishop of London, who had claimed full episcopal authority within the Abbey, was compensated for his disappointment by receiving the Westminster manor of Sunbury. But the question still smouldered from time to time; for example, Richard de Crokesley was compelled to obtain from Innocent IV a bull[1] to the effect that neither Fulk Basset, Bishop of London, nor any of his successors should claim any right in the Monastery to its prejudice. Again, Henry III was in the habit not only of attending Mass in the Abbey church but also of inviting higher dignitaries than the Abbot and monks to officiate there on great occasions, without the consent and indeed against the desire of the Convent. This also must be guarded against, as a possible breach of privilege. So we find Abbot Crokesley making suit on the matter to the Pope and obtaining a bull from Alexander IV to the effect that the frequent introduction of Boniface of Savoy, Archbishop of Canterbury, by Henry III, to celebrate Mass on the Feast of St. Peter and St. Paul, on the Feast of St. Edmund the King and on other high days, was not to be taken as derogating in any way from the Abbey's rights and privileges. Abbot Crokesley was fated not to read this bull,[2] for it was executed at Viterbo on 12 July, 1258, and he died on the 17th of that month during a Parliament at Winchester; but it was carefully copied into the great chartulary. Nor was Richard de Ware without his anxieties in this respect; for we find a bull of Clement IV (Viterbo, 9 August, 1267)[3] which refers to the state of the English realm as a boiling whirlpool of universal disruption,[4] and notes that Henry de Sandwich, Bishop of London, has been interfering with the Abbey's right to the advowson of the vicarage of Staines; so the

[1] Dated Assisi, 11 September, 1253; Domesday, f. 17 *b*.

[2] Domesday, f. 19 *b*.

[3] *Ibid.* f. 22 *b*.

[4] "Statu regni Anglie generalis dissencionis turbine fluctuante."

Pope once more decrees that there is to be no diminution of the Convent's exemptions and privileges.

Walter de Wenlok, therefore, began early, indeed almost before he left Rome fully confirmed, to obtain a recognition of the same privileges, receiving on 7 May, 1284, the day before that on which the order for his benediction was issued, a bull which in "common form" confirmed to him and the Convent all the liberties and immunities conceded to them by previous bulls and indulgences.[1] He was thus the more ready on his return to England to be on his guard against similar unlawful intrusions within his domain. So we find constant notifications in the chartulary[2] to the effect that Edward I and his queens, i.e. the two Alianores, his mother and his wife, or perhaps some other magnate, have invited the Archbishop of Canterbury or the Bishop of London (being in this case John Peckham and Richard de Gravesend respectively) to celebrate Mass or officiate at funerals. The dates of these statements can generally be found to coincide fairly with some state funeral or other such occasion. Thus Archbishop Peckham writes on 25 August, 1284, and Richard de Gravesend on 27 August, which we may perhaps connect with the burial of Edward's son Alfonzo, who died at Windsor on St. Magnus' Day, the 19th of that month, and was interred in the Abbey near St. Edward's Shrine.[3] Another notification of Peckham's was issued on 17 December, 1290, which was the day on which Edward's queen, Alianore, was at last laid to rest "secundum magnificentiam regiam ultra quod hactenus visum est"[4] at the foot of Henry III's tomb in the Abbey. All these carefully recorded documents are anxious to state that the action or the presence of the prelate in question is in no wise meant to derogate from the exemption of the church of Westminster or to threaten it in any way or to claim thereafter any jurisdiction in the Abbey for himself and his successors. They

[1] Domesday, f. 25.
[2] *Ibid.* f. 643 *b*, 644.
[3] *Flor. Hist.*, iii. 61.
[4] *Ibid.* p. 71.

recall in fact the language still used in modern times when the Primate, or any Bishop on his behalf, officiates at the consecration of a Bishop at Westminster.

Not that Wenlok's dealings with the Papal authority were altogether untroubled. We have, for instance, a pathetic statement[1] from Master Reginald of St. Albans, whom the Abbot commissioned as his Proctor at Rome in October, 1288, setting forth in the usual terms that he was himself fully occupied with personal and conventual business[2] and so could not personally pay his visit "ad limina". But the Proctor had difficulties, which he describes, with the Papal ostiary. One Bartucius de Tuderto was then keeping the door by which access to the Pope was gained. Humbly and urgently the Proctor requested this functionary to permit him to pass through in order that he might carry out his master's business, but the ostiary was obdurate: it was not the proper time, he said, to get admission. Whereupon Master Reginald formulated and recited a protest in the presence of notaries and other witnesses, all Italians. "It is not my fault," he urged, "if I cannot fulfil my mission; I have done all that I can to visit the threshold of St. Peter in my lord Abbot's name."

At an earlier date Wenlok had to face one of those unpleasant incidents which bring Popes into contact with monasteries on questions of morals, and of which there were happily few, as far as we know, in the case of Westminster. The candour of the keepers of the muniments in storing up this particular document[3] is worthy of notice. It belongs to 1285 (15 July), the first year of Honorius IV, and is addressed to the Abbot of St. Albans.[4] The burden of it is that a layman of the diocese of Rochester, one John de Kampe, and his wife have laid accusations of immorality against William de Watford, a

[1] *Mun.* 9517. (For the text see p. 45.)

[2] "Pro nostris et monasterii nostri negociis . . . diuersimode occupati."

[3] *Mun.* 22942. (For the text see p. 46.)

[4] Roger de Northone.

Westminster monk. This slander, it continues, has caused serious harm and expense to the House, and the duty of investigating the matter has been laid on the Abbot of St. Albans. William de Watford [1] had now been a monk for more than ten years; he was the Convent Granger in 1274-75 [2] and again in 1283-84; [3] and it appears in other ways that he enjoyed the confidence of the brethren, for he was frequently sent to manors such as Ashford and Wandsworth [4] to collect the revenues. We have no knowledge of the result of the investigation of the case by the Abbot of St. Albans; but our next information points to the complete establishment of William de Watford in the trust of his fellows. He was appointed in 1297 to be Convent Treasurer, retaining that responsible office till his death in 1299.

A few days later, on 9 August, 1285, Honorius issued a decree of a pleasanter kind, granting to Walter de Wenlok a faculty for a portable altar [5]; it was a privilege not infrequently granted by the Popes to members of our Monastery and of others; but it meant much to a man like Wenlok, whose official life was one of perpetual motion, and he had it entered in the Domesday chartulary.

But, though he was much away, he still exercised his rights over the daily lives of his brethren, and the effect can be traced even when they were at Divine Service in the Abbey church and he as far away as Orleans. For from that city on 19 June, 1287, he sent them a special statute, which was also copied into the capacious chartulary.[6] It is addressed to Prior John de Coleworth and the Convent in general, but more particularly to the Precentor. As often happens, the document is defective in names; it indicates the Prior simply by a J., but there is no doubt about his identity; and it does not name the Precentor,

[1] Some of the details here given are additions to his record in *Monks of Westminster*, p. 62 f.

[2] *Mun.* 8762. [3] *Mun.* 16377. [4] *Mun.* 26657; 27498.

[5] Domesday, f. 26. [6] *Ibid.* 641*b*, 642.

which is a loss to us, because we know that William de Lokeleya held the office in 1278 and Laurence de Benflet in 1297.[1] The provisions of the statute are not, perhaps, of any great novelty, but we must take the fact of such provisions being made as an indication that at the time they needed to be emphasised. With a view to things being well ordered in the choir, says Wenlok, let the "hebdomadarius" distinctly pronounce two or three words at the beginning of a hymn, while the rest remain silent; and let the same plan be applied to half the first verse of a Psalm, to the introits at Masses, to the Gradual, the Sanctus, and the like. "I have seen these things done," he adds, "among orderly persons in colleges in foreign parts and particularly in the Roman Court".[2] Apparently there were those at Westminster who despised this revived ordinance. They even aggravated the Precentor and the Succentor, who were responsible for good order in the Choir, by talking or nodding,[3] and the Abbot gives command that any such were to be severely dealt with at the morrow's Chapter, no matter how high their standing or how advanced their years. On the other hand, if the Precentor or his assistant failed to carry out these provisions, then they too must be taken to task.

From the Choir he turns to the Chapter. When the business of the latter is concluded on any day, Wenlok would have him who holds the Chapter—no doubt, one of the various Priors, or a senior monk, if all the Priors are absent—proceed along the Dark Cloister to the infirmary, visit all the sick and infirm, inquire if they lack anything, and next day mention these needs in Chapter, in order that they may be supplied; for example, one of the infirm brethren may be feeling lonely; if so, a companion should be assigned to him.

[1] *Monks of Westminster*, p. 203.

[2] "Predicta omnia inter personas collegiatas bene dispositas in diuersis regionibus et maxime in curia Romana vidimus obseruari."

[3] "Per uerba exacerbauerint vel per nutum."

From the Chapter he passes to the Refectory, where much depends on the ringing of the bell or gong[1] at the right time. The monk whose duty it happens to be to sit at the "skilla," or bell, at the high table[2] is also responsible for the sounding of the other bell at the door of the Refectory; so he must not be absent from that post, unless pressing need requires it. When the ringing of the outside bell, which summons the brethren to meals, has ceased, the President should pass at once to the high table, whereas the Abbot understands that considerable inconvenience is being caused by long delays at this point.

Having given his monks commands which affect their life in the Choir, the Chapter, the Infirmary, and the Refectory, Wenlok has only one important sphere of conventual duty left to legislate for, and that is the Dormitory. Here he is content to say that no one must leave the Dormitory before the prescribed moment, either by day or by night, unless he can show reasonable cause.

One small piece of legislation affecting the economic relations of his Obedientiaries may be noticed in this connexion, though it belongs to a much later date. On 25 February, 1303, he affixed his seal, and the Chapter their seal, and the Precentor his seal to a chirograph,[3] which dealt with the respective appanages of the Precentor and the Cellarer. Near the Abbey vineyard southwards was a piece of meadow-land which formerly belonged to the Precentor. It was now assigned to the Inner Cellarer to be added to the vineyard, and the Precentor's recompense was that on the First Sunday of Lent annually he should receive six shillings from the Cellarer, with the right to recover possession of the meadow, if the Cellarer should fail to make the agreed payment, and to receive any issues from the vines in the meantime, until what was due to him was paid in full.

But Wenlok had rights to assert over other Houses

[1] "Cimbalum . . . ante hostium refectorii."

[2] *Cf. Monks of Westminster*, p. 24 f.

[3] *Mun.* 17489 (see p. 47.)

besides Westminster itself. I must not be tempted by a natural interest in one of my predecessors in the See of Worcester to recite here the whole story of the struggle between the Abbey and Bishop Giffard about the alleged visitatorial rights of the latter over the cell or priory of Greater Malvern, because most of the story belongs rather to a life of Richard de Ware, and a settlement was reached in 1282 and 1283,[1] when Wenlok was apparently a recent recruit. But the trouble was not quite over. John Peckham, the Archbishop, had not consented to the counsel and deed of those who composed the dispute, and in 1285 he precipitated a crisis by himself asserting visitatorial rights over Greater Malvern, in spite of the fact that the Pope had approved of the settlement arrived at by his Judges Delegate, the Bishop of Winchester (John de Pontissara), the Bishop of Bath and Wells (Robert Burnell), and the Abbot of Waltham Holy Cross (Reginald de Maidenhithe). The documents [2] describing this instalment of the quarrel are lengthy and need not be described in detail. The struggle with Peckham lasted from 1285 to 1289, and it ended in the Abbey's favour. We may be content to recover one of the scenes in it. Alexander of Pershore, Wenlok's active friend and Hadham's inveterate enemy, makes a journey to Clacton in Essex where Richard de Gravesend, Bishop of London, is residing in one of his many manors. Alexander is at the moment Sacrist of the Abbey, and he carries with him certain letters of Pope Nicholas IV, which have been entrusted to his care by the Judges Delegate in the dispute already mentioned, together with a request that the Bishop will inspect these letters. The Judges also send citatorial letters of their own, and the scribe of the chartulary sets such store by these that he gives a careful description of the seal attached by each Judge.[3] The Bishop read these letters word for word with all due respect and, after being fully seized of the

[1] Domesday, f. 308 ff.

[2] *Mun.* 22929-42; Domesday, f. 311*b*-313.

[3] *Ibid.*, f. 312.

purport of them, observed that the order to act on the letters was laid on either himself or his official. It would be more becoming, he thought, that the mandate should be executed by his official. A Bishop of London, he must have thought, would prefer not to cite an Archbishop of Canterbury *per se* as long as it was possible to do so *per alium.* So he promised at once to instruct his official to act. A few days later, Alexander de Persore stood before the official in the parish church of Stepney, along with certain clerks and jurists and Dan Laurence,[1] the vicar of Stepney. Persore handed in the citatorial letters, which were retained, and the Papal letters, which were returned to him. The official also found in the bundle some missives from the Bishop of London himself; but the notary[2] who records the proceedings admits that the contents of these were not divulged to him.

He knew, however, what was the tenor of the citatorial letters, which set forth that Pope Nicholas [Feb., 1288—April, 1292] informed the Judges Delegate of his having received from the exempt Abbey of Westminster a complaint that, in the course of his visitation as Metropolitan, the Archbishop of Canterbury had come to the diocese of Worcester and had commanded the Prior and Convent of Greater Malvern to admit him to visit their House and to exhibit to him the due procuration. But the Prior and Convent demurred. They were subject, and they could prove it by special bulls, to the Abbey of Westminster in spiritualities and in temporalities, and therefore they could not lawfully be obliged to admit his Grace for a visitation of their House. Nor was this the first occasion of the kind. In the days of Pope Honorius IV [April, 1285—April, 1287], Peckham had made similar attempts, aggravating and molesting the brethren of Greater Malvern, excommunicating their persons and laying their House

[1] One instance among many in which our documents enable us to make additions to the *Repertorium.*

[2] One Adam of Butterwick, Lincs., called de Lindeseya.

under interdict, and also pronouncing in public the excommunication of John de Sutton,[1] a monk of the Abbey, now of nearly thirty years' standing, although he was not involved in any lawful sentence of excommunication. On that occasion, says our document, the Abbot and Convent caused the Archbishop to be summoned before the Judges Delegate; but these worthies were in a delicate position: two of them, the Bishops of Winchester and of Bath and Wells, were his Grace's Suffragans, and almost all the property of the third, the Abbot of Waltham Holy Cross, lay within his Grace's province; so either through fear or favour they allowed the cause to be kept for more than a year in suspense. But our Abbot and Convent, nothing daunted, approached Pope Honorius over the heads of these dilatory Judges Delegate, and Honorius committed the question to the Cardinal Deacon of St. Nicholas in the Tullian Prison (S. Nicola in Carcere) as auditor. Nothing of any consequence resulted from this, and at the end of over two years the cause remained in an undetermined condition. So when Nicholas IV had succeeded Honorius IV, Wenlok and his Convent tried again, and the Papal letters, which Alexander de Persore carried first to the Bishop of London at Clacton and then to his lordship's official at Stepney, contained the orders of Pope Nicholas, given at Reate, 28 May, 1288, to the effect that, in order to spare trouble and expense to the parties, the three Judges Delegate, or any two of them, are to proceed as commanded by the late Pope Honorius, and are to complete the case within six months of the date just given, either by giving judgment or by bringing the parties to a settlement. For this purpose the Archbishop, as already stated, must be cited to appear. The Judges Delegate therefore order the Bishop of London or his official to cite the Primate to appear before them in St. Paul's Church, London, either in person or by his Proctor, on the next law-day after St. Dunstan's Feast

[1] Cf. *Monks of Westminster*, p. 54; see also p. 6, *supra*.

(21 Oct.), by which time a large part of the six months allowed would have passed by.

But our document, while it omits the date of Alexander de Persore's visit to Clacton, says that his appearance at Stepney occurred on the Friday following, which was 18 February. Now 18 February fell on Friday in the year 1289. So it is not too much to say that from 1285 to 1289 Walter de Wenlok and his brethren were struggling to maintain their rights[1] with regard to Greater Malvern against the most powerful person in the English Church; and Peckham, though he was defeated in the end, was not less obstinate than they, for it was necessary in the case of one important Papal document, contradicting his excommunication of Brother John de Sutton, to lay the parchment formally on his Grace's arm. He declined the weakness of taking it in his hand.

But this quarrel with Peckham was scarcely concluded before the Archbishop, smarting, perhaps, under his defeat, attacked the Abbey at a point in which it proved to be more vulnerable. The story of William of Pershore, the apostate Franciscan, is almost too familiar to need repeating in detail and the Abbey muniments which bear upon it have long been accessible in the *Monumenta Franciscana*.[2] But Wenlok was deeply involved in it, and, though the coincidence of names may easily be overemphasised, Alexander de Persore took no small part in the troubles that arose about his namesake. The suggestion of the editor of *Monumenta Franciscana* that Alexander was "possibly a relation or formerly a fellow-monk in Pershore Abbey" has little probability and the latter part of it is quite unlikely. Our Abbots were constantly at Pershore, and would naturally choose their recruits from the lads of the place rather than from the already professed monks of the local monastery. We hear of Alexander first in 1284, and nineteen years later he

[1] The legal side of the case is detailed in *Mun.* 22929-42.

[2] II, xiv. 31-62; *Mun.* 6386-97.

was, as is alleged, vigorously engaged in the activities of the great Burglary; which is at least a presumption that he entered our House at the usual age and had not spent time in another.

But what of William of Pershore? He began his monastic career in Pershore Abbey and afterwards joined the Order of St. Francis. But he decided to return to St. Benedict, and, owing to the power of the Franciscans, he sought shelter in our Abbey. Moreover, he brought away some books with him, whereby he not only robbed the Franciscan Order but also showed how lightly the rules of St. Francis were regarded by the Friars. Now John Peckham, apart from his membership of that Order, styled himself its special protector and guardian,[1] and the news that William had fled to the Abbey roused him to prompt action. In the matter of Greater Malvern the Bishop of London's official had cited the Archbishop at the Abbey's instigation; in this case the Archbishop called upon the same official to excommunicate the Abbey. For he could make use of a privilege granted to the Franciscans which said that both the apostates from the Order and all who abetted and protected them in their apostasy thereby incurred sentence of excommunication, without any hope of release except by presenting themselves humbly before his Holiness at Rome. So on 30 July, 1290, he issued from Wingham an injunction to the official that in all the churches of London and the suburbs, whether exempt or not, the bells should be rung and the candles lit, and at Mass on Sundays and feast-days the sentence of excommunication should be pronounced until further order herein.

The Abbey took its time to reply, and on 7 October in St. Paul's Cathedral appeared Brother Roger de Bures[2] as

[1] In the words of Brother Roger de Bures: "se asserit conservatorem seu executorem privilegiorum Fratribus Minoribus et eorum ordini a Sede Apostolica, ut dicitur, indultorum". *Mun.* 6386.

[2] Cf. *Monks of Westminster*, p. 65.

Proctor for the Abbot and Convent. He was then a junior monk, our earliest knowledge of him being contained in a compotus of the manor of Ashford, where he was collecting rents in 1289-90.[1] In later years he was detained for some months in the Tower of London for complicity in the Burglary of 1303. His present business was to appeal formally to the Apostolic See against the excommunication, which he did in the accustomed form.[2]

The next step can be traced in a "composition" dated at Orvieto, 4 April, 1291. For Roger de Bures' appeal was followed by a mission of Alexander de Persore to the Roman Court, accompanied by Master William de Bray, clerk. The case was placed in the hands of the Cardinal Presbyter of S. Lorenzo in Damaso, and the Proctors on each side agreed to abide by his arbitrament, of which we possess two drafts.[3] He ordered, firstly, that the Abbot and Convent should admit the right of the Friars to reclaim their man and should assist in that reclamation under a penalty of £300 to be paid in aid of the Holy Land; secondly, that the Abbot and Convent should purge themselves publicly in the Abbey church, in presence of certain representative Minorites and other witnesses, of the crime of having connived at the escape of William of Pershore after he had taken refuge in the House; thirdly, if they cannot or will not purge themselves of this offence, the Abbot must send his monks to the Roman Court for absolution, unless the Minister of the Franciscans agrees that absolution may be sought in England, the penalty in this case being £200 for the same object; fourthly, the Abbot and Convent should do all in their power to recover the person of the apostate, resorting, if necessary, to the aid of the civil arm; fifthly, the Abbot should produce one hundred marks for the expenses of the Friars in their search for William before the Feast of all Saints; sixthly, before Christmas next Walter de Wenlok should present himself before Archbishop Peckham and make humble

[1] *Mun.* 26669. [2] *Mun.* 6386. [3] *Mun.* 6387, 6397.

apology in prescribed words, under a penalty of one hundred marks, to be paid to his Grace for such pious uses as he might choose, but with the real consolation that the Archiepiscopal jurisdiction over the Abbey was not thereby established any more than it had previously been; seventhly, that the purloined books were to be restored to the Franciscans; eighthly, that the expenses incurred in this matter by divers friends of the Franciscans should be refunded by the Abbot before Michaelmas, up to a limit of one hundred marks; ninthly, that Abbot Walter should present himself before the next Provincial Chapter of the Grey Friars in London and, in testimony of his desire not to molest them as heretofore, should be heartily and lovingly reconciled to them; and lastly, that in future the whole matter should be shrouded in silence.

A few days later, on 21 April, this composition was varied in certain respects. Walter de Wenlok, as we shall see, was in France at the time, and it was arranged that he should make his purgation in Paris, provided he performed his act of personal humiliation before the Archbishop within two months of his return to England. But Walter de Wenlok was not at all pleased with the action of his Proctors in consenting to the Cardinal's award, even though one of them was the faithful Alexander de Persore himself. So from his retreat higher up the Seine he proceeded to Paris and on 20 May, in the church of St. Eustache, he made formal "contradiction"[1] of the terms of the arbitrament, one of the witnesses being Thomas de Dena, whom we may probably identify with a retainer of his, afterwards a monk, Thomas de la Dene.[2] To do him justice, Wenlok appears to have lost no time after hearing the result in making his attitude quite clear.

And the documents imply that he put up a good fight and won some of his contentions. The editor of the *Monumenta Franciscana* gives credit to the Grey Friars[3]

[1] *Mun.* 6389. [2] *Monks of Westminster*, p. 68. [3] Vol. II, xv.

for having modified the agreement, though they were in the right all through. We may venture to enter a plea for the vigour of Wenlok's resistance as a factor in the result. In any case more than three years later it was agreed[1] to reduce the monetary penalty to sixty marks, to be paid in three instalments at fixed times. If there was no default in these payments the documents in the case were to become the property of our Convent; if the Abbey failed at any period to pay what was due the documents were to belong to the Franciscans. We have the actual receipts[2] as well as the documents to show that Wenlok and his brethren at last knew when they were beaten and made the appointed reparation for the crime of harbouring the apostate Friar.

In matters like these the contentions were, of course, of great public interest; but an elaborate organisation like the Abbey was seldom free from litigation of a lesser sort. We may choose a fight for tithes as typical of much else. Our Domesday chartulary[3] gives considerable space to the affairs of the Middlesex manor of Halliford, Upper and Nether, in the parish of Shepperton, and Walter de Wenlok had a special interest in the matter, because it was in his first year as Abbot, and just after his return from Rome, that the Abbey gained possession of the manor or regained it, for it was already their ancient fief. On 4 June, 1285, one Geoffrey de Aspale, or Haspale, a clerk of Edward I, quit-claimed the manor of Halegheford to the monks of Westminster on condition that they should provide two monk-chaplains to say Mass daily for ever for his soul; and on 23 August the assignment was confirmed by royal charter. Seisin was delivered by power of attorney, dated 25 November, and the usual letter to the tenants bears the same date.[4] By a further concord, 9 February, 1286, made in the King's Court at Westminster, Walter de Wenlok gave the manor to de Aspale for his life at a

[1] *Mun.* 6392.
[2] *Mun.* 6394, 6395.
[3] f. 146*b*-154.
[4] Domesday, f. 150.

pepper-corn rent, on condition that at his death it should revert to the Abbot.[1]

But in 1303 there arose a contention about the tithes. On 24 July, Robert de Winchelsey, Archbishop of Canterbury, issued from Stepney his mandate to the Dean of Middlesex and the Vicar of Sunbury that warning must be given to Nicholas of Halliford to pay the greater tithes of his demesne lands to the rector of Shepperton. But, as the summer wore on, the Archbishop became convinced that herein he had made a mistake; at his late visitation of the diocese of London he had accepted the bare statement of a layman that the right to the tithes lay with the rector; he was now convinced that this decision wronged the Abbot and Convent of Westminster. From this it will be concluded that the Abbey asserted itself and took proper steps to get his Grace's rash assignment reversed. They sent a Proctor to appear before the Archbishop's commissaries-general at Aldington in Kent, and there on 12 October the transmission of the tithes to the rector was pronounced to be null and void.[2] The Convent's claim was that the tithes could be put to its own uses, and for the moment that claim prevailed. The Archbishop sent the Dean of Middlesex to Shepperton to make this known, and on 22 November the latter reported that he had done as he was commanded; he went to Shepperton church, but rector and rector's Proctor alike deliberately absented themselves. However, some parishioners appeared, and in their presence the Dean warned the absent parties and solemnly excommunicated them. Nevertheless, the cause was not finished. We find a new Proctor, John of Beverley, appearing for the Convent before the Archbishop, and a further "confession" of Nicholas of Halliford (29 Dec., 1303)[3] that he had no right whatever in the tithes; and we find also the senior monks being brought forward to give their testimony.

[1] This must mean, the Abbot as representing the Convent.

[2] Domesday, f. 153.

[3] *Ibid.*, f. 151*b*.

The Prior, William de Huntyndon, being sworn, asserted that he was over sixty and that for forty years and more he had known the Abbey to be in possession of the greater and the lesser tithes; so said Richard de Waltham, who was sixty-three, and Richard de Fanelore, who was six years younger;[1] the last was an important witness, for he had been Warden of the manor for two years, and so it had been his duty to give account of what was done with the issues.

The fact is that in this cause the Convent was contending against a rector—Adam de Blithe—who was himself a man of law; indeed, he speaks of himself as if he were a clerk in Abbot Wenlok's pay. For we have a letter[2] which he wrote to the Abbot in the course of the next summer and which purports to come to Wenlok from "suus si placet clericus". "I have carefully read," says Adam, "your Paternity's letters, and have pondered the matters you bring forward with respect to certain tithes within my parish of Shepperton. It appears to me that I should be transgressing the Lord's command were I to affect to be negligent in asserting the rights of my church. Yet I wish to ensue peace with all men, as much as in me lies; so I comply with your request to this extent, that I have instructed three Proctors (or one of them, if the other two are prevented) to appear for me in the case and to treat with you in a friendly way. For myself I am occupied with attendance on my lord the King, but, though absent, I greatly desire that in this matter peace may be restored without further litigation, if it can be done without injustice to any one." The letter is dated from "Striuelyn,"[3] 4 June [1304], and it shows that Wenlok had been using personal influence with the rector with a view to a settlement. The result is seen in a notarial instrument copied into "Domesday,"[4] and dated 23 June, 1304; it shows that Reginald de Hadham, as Walter de Wenlok's Proctor

[1] Domesday, f. 152*b*.
[2] *Mun.* 4981.
[3] Stirling.
[4] Domesday, f. 153*b*.

—the great quarrel had not yet arisen—and Master Walter of London (one of the three Proctors mentioned in Adam de Blithe's letter) met and finally agreed that from the current year, 1304, the tithes from Halliford Manor should be collected by one William de Marchia and deposited in a separate and well-guarded place, and that proceedings in the case should remain *in statu quo* until the third law day after next All Saints' Day. This meeting happened in St. Paul's Church, London, and one of the witnesses was Master Philip Martel, whom Adam de Blithe had mentioned as the first of his three Proctors.

The curious thing is that Adam's letter has appended to it a note to the effect that it was received at Westminster six months after it was written, about the Feast of St. Leonard (6 Nov.) 1304, and that before that date the Abbot and Convent were peremptorily cited by a clerk of the Roman Court then in England, under pain of suspension and interdict, to appear and give full account of the collection of the tithes for three years. In view of the threatened penalties they decided to comply. They put in their account, but the Roman clerk detained both the documents and the agents. The monks express a belief that the documents are in the keeping "sub sequestro" of Ralph de Sandwico, Constable of the Tower, and they are at their wit's end to know how to render their account without the necessary papers. However, an agreement was nevertheless reached; for on the Eve of All Saints, 1304, Adam de Blithe executed a "confession"[1] that the tithes from the demesne lands of Halliford within Shepperton parish do entirely belong to the Abbot and Convent, except the lands called La Crumbe and Le Ord and one acre near Houbrigge, lands recently reclaimed, the tithes of which belong, as before, to the rector.

So, while we must think of our Abbot as being often an absentee, we have here a case which testifies to his con-

[1] Domesday, f. 154.

cern for Abbey rights, and to his ability to intervene with effect in a long legal dispute.

Page 23. *Mun.* 9467.

Memorandum quod die lune proxima ante festum sancti Bartholomei anno regni regis Edwardi duodecimo Malcolmus de Harleye liberauit Waltero de Wenloc Abbati Westm. per preceptum domini Regis vasa subscripta que deposita fuerunt in thesaurario Westm. sub sigillo Magistri Henrici de Bray videlicet tres cuppas argenteas cum cooperculis. Item tres cuppas argenteas deauratas cum cooperculis et vnum cyphum cum pede deauratum. Item octo ciphos sine pede argenteos. Item duos picheros argenteos cum cooperculis. Item duas pelues argenteas. Item viginti et tria coclearia argentea. Item octodecim discos argenteos cum quatuordecim salsariis argenteis. Item vnum salsarium. Et memorandum quod vnus cophinus cum vna pixide eburnea et quidam alius cophinus de coreo remanent in cista vbi posita erant vasa predicta in quibus continentur jocalia que fuerunt Ricardi quondam Abbatis loci predicti, sub sigillo dicti Malcolmi, presentibus Abbate Westm̃ magistro Ada de Fylyby fratribus Johanne de Sutton et Ricardo de Waltham et Petro clerico. In cuius rei testimonium tam predictus Walterus Abbas quam Malcolmus predictus huic memorando sigilla sua alternative apposuerunt.

Page 25. *Mun.* 5438.

In dei nomine Amen. Per presens publicum instrumentum appareat euidenter quod quarto Kalendis Januarii Anno domini M° CCC^mo^ septimo indictione sexta in Abbathia Westmon. constitutus personaliter frater Reginaldus de Hadham Prior Westmon. in presencia mei Notarii infrascripti et testium subscriptorum rogauit me Notarium vt quandam litteram sigillo illustrissimi Regis domini Edwardi Regis Anglie quondam filii Regis Henrici signatam in publicam formam redigerem. Cuius tenor talis est.

Edwardus dei gracia Rex Anglie dominus Hibernie dux Aquitanie omnibus ad quos presentes littere peruenerint salutem. Cum nos et progenitores nostri dudum Reges Anglie post mortem Abbatum Ecclesie sancti Petri Westm. racione vacacionis eiusdem ecclesie ad blada in Grangiis oues boues equos et alia animalia equitaturam vasa

argentea jocalia libros Thesaurum et ad alia bona Abbatum mortuorum manum apponere et ea quasi nostra tenere hucusque consueuimus in graue dampnum ecclesie predicte et Abbatum futurorum, nos ob reuerenciam beati Petri spiritualis patroni ecclesie predicte et Edwardi Regis et pro salute anime domini Henrici Regis patris nostri et liberorum nostrorum quorum corpora in Ecclesia predicta requiescunt nec non pro salute anime nostre et animarum matris et consortis nostre et progenitorum et heredum nostrorum volentes quod ecclesia predicta sit adeo libera sicut aliqua ecclesia Regni nostri Waltero nunc Abbati et Conuentui eiusdem loci et successoribus suis concedimus quod quotienscunque predictam ecclesiam per mortem vel alio modo vacare contigerit nos vel Heredes nostri aut alii ministri nostri ad huius modi blada oues boues animalia equitaturam vasa jocalia libros Thesaurum vel alia bona Abbatum dicte ecclesie mortuorum manum non apponemus nec ea capi faciemus conuertenda in vsus nostros set ea omnia conuertantur et cedant in utilitatem Ecclesie predicte et futuri Abbatis eiusdem. Saluis tamen nobis et heredibus nostris exitibus prouenientibus de porcione assignata Abbatibus ibidem tempore vacacionis Abbacie predicte percipiendis eodem modo quo nos eos in vacacionibus aliquarum Abbaciarum et Prioratuum capere consueuimus et debemus. In cuius rei testimonium has litteras nostras fieri fecimus patentes. Teste me ipso apud Westm. XVIII° die februarii Anno Regni nostri quarto decimo.

[Notary = Petrus de sancto Jacobo. Witnesses = Geoff. de Aldenham, W. de Bampford, Roger de Ruthope, clerici.]

Page 29. *Mun.* 9517.

In nomine domini amen. Anno domini millesimo CC° LXXX^mo octauo Pontificatus domini Nicolai pape Quarto anno primo Indictione prima mense Aprilis die terciodecimo. In presencia mei Notarii et testium subscriptorum ad hoc specialiter uocatorum et rogatorum, Magister Reginaldus de sancto Albano procurator venerabilis patris domini W. dei gracia Abbatis Westm. ad Romanam ecclesiam nullo medio pertinentis ordinis sancti Benedicti Londoniensis diocesis habens ab ipso mandatum uisitaudi nomine ipsius domini Abbatis sancti Petri limina et sedem apostolicam prout in litteris inde confectis predicti domini Abbatis munitis sigillo plenius continetur constitutus in

presencia Bartucii de Tuderto Hostiarii domini pape custodientis tunc hostium per quod itur ad dominum papam petiit ab eodem Bartucio Hostiario et ipsum instanter et humiliter requisiuit ut permitteret ipsum intrare ad dominum papam impensurum et facturum predicta omnia et singula ac alia que habebat a predicto domino Abbate in mandatis. Qui Hostiarius ipsum procuratorem intrare non permisit et respondit ei quod tempus non erat intrandi et tunc predictus Magister Reginaldus procurator nomine procuratorio predicti domini Abbatis protestatus fuit ibidem in modum qui sequitur. Ego Reginaldus de sancto Albano clericus procurator venerabilis patris domini W. dei gracia Abbatis Westm. . . . peto a te Bartucio de Tuderto domini pape Hostiario et te humiliter requiro et instanter ut permittas me intrare ad dominum papam impensurum et facturum predicta omnia et singula que habeo . . . et quia me Reginaldum procuratorem predictum requisitus humiliter a me ad dominum papam intrare non permittis coram Johanne Amati de Guarcino publico apostolice sedis Notario et testibus infrascriptis protestor quod per me non stat quominus exequar ea que in infrascriptis litteris continentur et quod propter hoc predicto domino meo Abbati imposterum ullum preiudicium sequetur, et quatenus in me est dominum papam et limina sancti Petri uisito nomine domini mei Abbatis predicti. Pateat vniuersis quod nos W. dei gracia Abbas Westm. . . . cum pro nostris et monasterii nostri negociis uariis et arduis sic sumus diuersimode occupati quod beati Petri limina non possimus personaliter uisitare ad dicta limina sancti Petri et sedem apostolicam uisitandi dilectum nobis in Christo Magistrum Reginaldum de Sancto Al[bano clericum pro]curatorem nostrum facimus ordinamus et constituimus Ratum habentes et gratum [quic]quid in premissis nostro nomine duxerit faciendum. . . . Datum London, x° Kal. Novembris, anno domini millesimo cc° octogesimo septimo. Actum Rome apud sanctum Petrum ante predictum hostium Presentibus Magistro Gerardo de Siccis de Bononia et Francisco Andree de Fida Firmane diocesis Testibus. . . .

Page 29. *Mun.* 22942.

Item Honorius Episcopus &c dilecto filio Abbati de monasterio de sancto Albano Lincolniensis diocesis salutem &c. Conquesti sunt nobis Walterus Abbas et Conuentus

Westmonasterii Londoniensis ordinis sancti Benedicti quod Johannes de Kampe laicus et Matildis uxor eius Roffensis diocesis falso asserentes Willelmum de Watford eiusdem monasterii monachum incontinencie uitio laborare et alias fore diuersis criminibus vitiatum eum super hoc apud bonos et graues nequiter diffamauerunt propter quod dicti Abbas et Conuentus dampna grauia et expensas se asserunt incurrisse. Ideoque discrecioni tue per apostolica scripta mandamus quod partibus conuocatis audias causam &c. faciens &c. Datum Tibur. Idus Julii pontificatus nostri primo. (15 July, 1285.)

Page 32. *Mun.* 17489.

Pateat vniuersis quod nos W. permissione diuina Abbas Westm. et eiusdem loci Conuentus vnanimi consensu assignauimus placeam cum prato iuxta vineas nostras ex parte australi que priscis temporibus pratum Precentoris nostri dicebatur, quod a tempore confeccionis presencium et deinceps cedat ad commodum officii Celerarii nostri intrinseci qui pro tempore fuerit pro vineis et Curtilagiis ibidem plantandis sicut includitur sepibus et fossatis cum omnibus suis pertinenciis. Et quod Precentor noster qui pro tempore fuerit pro supradictis placea et prato singulis annis percipiat sex solidos sterlingorum dominica prima Quadragesime per manus Celerarii memorati. Et si forte contingat quod absit supradictum Celerarium in solucione prefate pecunie ad dictum terminum deficere licebit eidem Precentori dictam placeam cum prato sine aliqua contradiccione cuiuscunque resumere et retinere vna cum proficuo de eisdem medio tempore proueniente quousque de predicta pecunia eidem Precentori totaliter fuerit satisfactum. Et ne presens assignacio recedat a memoria futurorum hoc scriptum cyrographatum sigillo nostro et sigillo communi Capituli nostri vna cum sigillo Precentoris duximus roborandum. Datum apud Westm. xxv die februarii Anno gracie M° CCC° secundo.

CHAPTER IV.

THE ABBOT'S KINDRED.

Now that we have seen him safely restored to his native land after the toils of a journey to Rome, let us take a look at the man himself. It is just possible that we still possess a portrait of him in wood. For Prof. Lethaby[1] has pointed out that our canopied and wonderfully painted sedilia are to be connected in date with the tomb to which Sebert's body was translated (according to Walsingham) in 1308, and that the workmanship agrees with this date. In 1307, Walter de Wenlok was laid to rest close to the high altar, on its south side;[2] that is, just in front of the sedilia. The latter were in all likelihood erected from plans which he had approved and which may even have been finished before he died. Therefore, as the mitred head of an Abbot is a prominent feature of the canopy, and is itself obviously a portrait, it is natural to believe that it represents Wenlok. It is a young strong face; indeed, there are other reasons for supposing that he came to his high office in the prime of life. The eye-brows are highly arched; the nose is finely modelled; the chin is firmly rounded; there is a sense of almost Pharaonic calm about the whole. At one time the sculpture was coloured and gilded, indeed, it preserves some colour still, and the jewels of the mitre must have shone brightly, in proud competition with the gilded magnificence of the whole sanctuary. At all events, a look at the face helps us to understand his story.

His origin is revealed to us in a document copied (per-

[1] W. R. Lethaby, *Westminster Abbey and the King's Craftsmen*, pp. 19, 348.

[2] "Juxta magnum altare versus austrum," *Flete*, p. 119.

haps during his abbatial period) into the Domesday chartulary.[1] It is a notification from ten Italian Bishops of forty days' indulgence to those penitents who resort to Westminster on St. Peter's Day and other festivals, including that of St. Milburg, the wonder-working abbess who built the nunnery at Wenlock in Shropshire, and was our Abbot's special patroness; and who have devoutly prayed for the safety and well-being of Dom. Walter de Wenlok, Abbot of Westminster, and of Agnes, his mother, during their lives, and for their souls after their death, and for the soul of Philip, apothecary,[2] of Wenlok, whose body lies in St. Milburg's churchyard at Wenlock, and who, as we know, was the Abbot's father, though the document does not specifically say so. It is dated at Reate in the fourth year of Pope Boniface VIII, i.e. 1298.

But we can get earlier and surer information than this out of a series of acquittances, which show that in 1290 the Abbot was negotiating the purchase of some land at Sponhulle (Spoonhill, in Ellesmere, Co. Salop), on his mother's behalf. The vendor was William, son of Hugh, of Clun, about twenty miles from Wenlock, who sold both the land and the crops growing on it, and gave one receipt[3] at Westminster, on 14 February, 1290, for 55½ marks, which included one mark for the expense of his journey to town with his wife, Cristiana; another[4] at Sutton-under-Brailes on Low Sunday for £1 3s. 4d.; and a third,[5] at Wenlock on 26 July for £4. All these sums came from the Abbot and were paid by Alexander de Persore or some other member of his household. The first receipt speaks of Agnes, "dicte la Specere de Wenlok matri eiusdem Abbatis"; the other two say of her: "que fuit vxor Philippi le Espicer de Wenlak". It is thus clear that our Abbot's father was dead before the date of this purchase.

[1] f. 407.

[2] I regret to state that his name was wrongly printed as William in *Monks of Westminster*, p. 60.

[3] *Mun.* 28852 * (see p. 62).

[4] *Mun.* 28853 (see p. 63).

[5] *Mun.* 28865 (see p. 63).

His widow may have been "called the Apothecary," either because her husband had been so employed or because after his death she kept on the business still.

The question arises, whether the parents were not only tradespeople but prosperous; and it is provoked by an entry in the Register of Bishop Thomas de Cantelupe.[1] On 18 September, 1277, the Bishop admitted to the diaconate at Leominster one "Walterus de Wenloke, ad titulum patrimonii," a phrase which implies what patrons call "private means," and a year later the same man was advanced to priest's orders, "ad presentacionem Prioris de Wenloke". There is no proof of the identity of this candidate with the future Abbot of Westminster; but there is also no improbability about his transference from Wenlock Priory to our Abbey, and the date suits our facts, for we have seen him appearing for the first time in Westminster documents in the year 1280-81. Thus we are quite possibly dealing with the scion of a provincial family of some substance, who was ordained as such, entered religion in his local Convent, and shortly afterwards exchanged it for ours. In any case, whether his mother needed or could dispense with his aid, her son, as we shall see, cared for her amply till her death.

The little Shropshire town lay somewhat outside the beat of Westminster Abbots and Bailiffs as they went their rounds of the properties. The Worcestershire and Warwickshire estates in the Abbot's portion are situate a good distance to the south and it is not easy to see how this Wenlock lad was selected for inclusion among the monks of Westminster. The majority of his contemporaries, as a glance at their surnames will show, came from Herts and Suffolk and the Thames Valley—Aldenham and Hadham and Watford, Bures and Sudbury, Reading and Henley, are names which we shall meet often in the course of our story. It may be, of course, that his father, out of reverence for St. Milburg, dedicated him to the monastic life and (if he first entered Wenlock Priory)

[1] *Canterbury and York Soc.*, pt. ii., pp. 300, 307.

boldly brought him to the Abbey afterwards with a petition for his admission to the famous and envied House. But we can affirm no more about this than we can about the date of his entry. Our first trace of him, as already stated, is concerned with the year 1280-81 when, as an apparently junior monk, he was engaged on manorial affairs at Ashwell, being entered as W. Walnock. Yet he was of sufficient experience in 1282-83 to be sent by the Convent to the General Chapter of the Benedictines at Reading. If we suppose that he was then thirty-five and leave out of account his conjectural ordination at Leominster, he would have been born about 1247, and would have attained to full monkhood about 1270, in the latter part of Abbot Ware's reign and at the period when the *Consuetudinary* had lately taken shape. But quite young monks were sent on such errands; he may have been but five-and-twenty.

It may be regarded as the result of Walter's rise in the House that "de Wenlok" became a common name on the monastic roll, no less than three monks bearing it there during his reign. He made Brother Reymund de Wenlok his "Custos Hospicii" in 1287. Of another, Brother R. de Wenlok, we hear only through an Almoner's payment on the day of his sepulture.[1] The third, John de Wenlok, was perhaps a relation. We come upon him first in a compotus of 1287-88,[2] and in 1296 the Abbot instructed his two treasurers, Richard de Fanelore and Alexander de Persore, to deliver twenty shillings to Brother John.[3] But there is one incident recorded in Walter de Wenlok's voluminous correspondence which implies a closer connexion. It appears that his sister, of whom more presently, had been staying in the house of one Gunelde Lauwes, and that this was the result of an arrangement between her and Brother John, to which the Abbot was not a party. Therefore he orders Henry

[1] *Mun.* 18962 *; *Monks of Westminster*, p. 66.
[2] *Mun.* 26666. [3] *Mun.* 31324.

Payn, the Sub-Prior,[1] to summon these persons to his presence, to make careful inquiry from Brother John as to whether he had paid the landlady for her trouble, and there and then to discharge any arrears that were due "lest after the sister's departure, there should be grumbling or a disturbance among the neighbours about her sojourn, which Heaven forbid". The letter[2] is dated the Saturday after St. James's Day (25 July), in the thirty-fifth year of Edward—an impossible date, for on 7 July, 1307, Edward I passed away at Burgh-on-Sands, Cumberland. It is only right to add, lest any ill construction should be put upon the Abbot's nervousness, that his sister was then an elderly invalid, and was in fact dead by Michaelmas, 1307.

Let us take what notice we can of his mother and other relations. Whether she kept the business going or not, the apothecary's widow lived to see her son raised to the Abbacy of Westminster. We can no more tell her age at the time than we can tell his; but if she was well stricken in years, she was not so in bodily activity, and for fifteen years out of the twenty-four of his reign we can watch his constant interest in her welfare and her ability to move about the country. When a serious matter like the Robbery of the Treasury happens after an Abbot has been twenty years in office, it is natural to conclude, as Prof. Tout does in his interesting lecture on that crime,[3] that the administration is becoming slack and weak, because the Abbot is in his dotage. But whatever is lacking from our story it has two essential features; one is that the Abbot, being much upon the road, enters but little into the daily work of Abbey affairs, and so the avoidance of slackness does not depend upon him; the other that during Wenlok's days the financial system was never slack. And

[1] *Monks of Westminster*, p. 71. [2] *Mun.* 31494 (see p. 63).

[3] T. F. Tout, *A Mediæval Burglary*, p. 8: "The abbey had gone to sleep . . . the abbot, Walter of Wenlock, was an old man whose hold on the monks was slight."

it is through its very carefulness that we are in a position to watch his mother, old as she may have been, undergoing the fatigue of a mediæval journey from Wenlock to Islip in 1297. It looks as if in 1283, when he was elected, his mother was little over sixty, and he hardly forty; so that he would be scarcely sixty-four when he passed away.

Whatever faults he had it is evident that he was an affectionate son. The proof of this may rest upon small and insignificant entries in his ledgers, but taken cumulatively it can hardly be resisted. It begins quite early in his career. We have a record of a progress through the manors in the eastward parts and the Midlands during the autumn of 1286.[1] It took him first to Hertfordshire—Aldenham, Wheathampstead, Stevenage, Ashwell and Amwell; then to Sawbridgeworth and the Essex properties—Feering, Benfleet, Ockendon, so that he could return to Westminster for St. Edward's Translation; then on through Surrey. But the point on his journey when he would be nearest to his mother's home in Wenlock was Islip, where he kept All Saints' Day, and he had evidently arranged to have news of her there, for his Seneschal enters the simple but significant item: "Dat' garcioni matris Abbatis redeuntis ad ipsam vjd.". The news was there on his arrival and an assurance went back to the old lady that all was well. He travelled nearer to her in 1287, going a round of the western parts—Pershore and Malvern and Bourton; and again some one was with him from his native town, one William de Wenlok, to whom could be entrusted ten shillings "ad opus matris domini Abbatis".[2] It was the same in 1288-89 when xls. went to her in November, and a messenger came from her in December, and fish, costing 9s. 4d., was sent to her in February, and xls. were handed to her go-between, one Richard Engelard of Wenlock, in March. But the year 1289-90 was her great time, for she was brought up from Shropshire to see her son in his high station. At first

[1] *Mun.* 24490. [2] *Mun.* 24492.

sight all we can tell is that it happened between 24 June, 1289, and 8 September, 1290, for in a list of the Abbot's gifts of various jewels to friends and dependents during that period it is stated that one of the "ficalia minora," costing 4s. each, was handed to the Abbot's mother that she might make her offering at St. Edward's Shrine "in primo aduentu suo apud Westm.," and it is pleasant to think of the good "especere" being conducted, no doubt, from La Neyte to the Abbey and then through the cloister into the church, in order that she might have her first view of the famous and gleaming tomb in which the Confessor's wandering body had been deposited with great pomp some twenty years before. But it becomes clear that the Abbot brought her up to London by degrees during the summer of 1289, for during the Michaelmas quarter she was at his manor of Pyrford in Surrey, twopence being entered [1] as the expenses of a page who conveyed thither some wine for her use. The Abbot bought her a pair of shoes for 8d.; but he would have her well dressed, and there was an outlay of no less than £4 6s. 3d. on a "pannus de rosset" for her and his sister. But her pride, we may suppose, was not in the fine things he bought for her as much as in his own dealings with the great ones of the land. For at the same time he is welcoming a runner who comes bearing a letter from overseas from the Lord Edmund, the King's brother, and is paying twenty shillings to a notary for making and transcribing a process against the Archbishop of Canterbury.[2]

The visit was of some duration, and she spent Christmas with him, for there is an entry [3] of two shillings "pro oblacione matris Abbatis in festo Natalis domini". But she had passed some of the time between then and

[1] *Mun.* 24493 (2).

[2] It may be that here are the preliminary mutterings of the case against Westminster on the part of the Franciscans in the matter of the apostate William of Pershore. Cf. Chap. III.

[3] *Mun.* 24493 (3).

Michaelmas at Wandsworth; provender for the horses of the cart which conveyed her thither cost 1s. 11d. and Robert de Coleworthe, the fishmonger, was subsequently paid a bill for 4s. 10d. for the fish he had supplied to her at that place. When she returned to Westminster there was again a busy scene to interest her. There were Christmas presents to be bought for their Majesties—four dozen rabbits at 5d. each and eight peacocks at 3s. each—and these were despatched to the Palace with the Abbot's humble duty. Or she sees the excitement when a servant of the Abbot of St. Edmundsbury arrives leading a bear, and receives a compliment of two shillings. Or she watches her son on St. Bride's Day (1 Feb.) take boat from La Neyte and pass down stream to attend service at St. Bride's church in the City, the advowson of which passed from the Abbot and Convent to the Dean and Chapter and still remains in their hands. Or there is the impression created when Simon the runner arrives at the Abbot's mansion bearing a message from "the old Queen,"[1] that is, Alianore of Provence, then (1290) a nun at Amesbury, in Wilts, where she died the following year, fifty-five years after her marriage to Henry III. Agnes, the "especere" of Wenlock, could sympathise with the other aged lady, for had not both of them lived to see their sons in high stations?

It was in the latter part of February that she began to prepare for her homeward journey. The Abbot himself was obliged to leave before her, getting to Pyrford for the first Sunday in Lent (19 Feb.) though he arranged that in his absence she should not be dull; for the accounts enter 3s. 2d. for "expenses of the Abbot's mother and of the minstrel and of her other servants who stayed behind after the Abbot's departure". It cost thirteen shillings to send them all back to Wenlock. And it is just possible that her surroundings in the little Shrophire town seemed less satisfying when she thought of the greater things

[1] "Cursori veteris Regine. . . iij. s.": *Mun.* 24493 (3).

that she had seen at Westminster; or rather, as her son was coming on a visit, she wanted the house to be more worthy of so notable a guest. Anyhow, in May, 1290,[1] there is an entry of £2 16s. for the purchase of paint in many colours—"brun," "orpiment," "vermillion," "rouge plum"—for the purpose of painting the "camera matris Abbatis apud Wenloc"; and at the same time bench-covers were provided against my lord's arrival. His accounts[2] show that he reached Wenlock on Saturday, 22 July, 1290, staying till the following Thursday, and the visit cost £16 12s. 8½d. Henceforward the references to her become still more casual, though they all speak of her son's care and affection. His journeys in 1290-91 brought him on Thursday, 7 February, 1291, to Todenham, which she could easily reach from Wenlock, and during her visit he gave her 40s.[3] before he returned once more to Islip. And for three or four years we lose sight of the old lady, though there are some references to her in undated letters which may belong to this interval. What may be taken for certain is that the Abbot was never within convenient distance of Wenlock without making an effort to see her. In 1294-95 he was once more at Todenham, and it seems that he had her brought to visit him, for the Provost of Todenham enters 1½d. as the expenses of Hugo de la Wrekone in coming thither with her wardrobe[4]; similarly there is an undated instruction to the Provost of Bourton to forward the dresses to Pershore; so she may have made a little tour with the Abbot in the western parts. No doubt the following letter,[5] without date and unfortunately without address, belongs to the same time:—

Health and grace to you. Whereas we have ordered your mother to come with our mother to Suttone

[1] *Mun.* 24493 (4). [2] *Mun.* 24493 (4) dors. [3] *Mun.* 9242.

[4] *Mun.* 25922. Hugo atte Wrekene, or Hugh Wroken, was one of the Abbot's pages, his half-yearly fee being 2s. (*Mun.* 31449); cf. *Mun.* 3438.

[5] *Mun.* 31540. (For the text see p. 64).

[no doubt, Sutton-under-Brailes, Warwickshire] on the morrow of St. John Baptist now ensuing we desire you to join us there, coming on our horses and not troubling about clothes. Procure for us 4 lbs. of drage and 4 lbs. of white powder, and 4 golden buckles at one mark, and bring them with you. And, if John of Wenlock or Robert of St. Martin[1] can furnish himself with a vehicle, we wish him to come with you. But if there are other things needful be careful to provide them cautiously. Farewell.

On 16 May, 1297, Wenlok bade the Provost of Pershore to forward her a sum of 10s. by a trustworthy messenger,[2] and by August she had arrived at Islip with two damsels in attendance. Wenlok wrote[3] a mandate to his Bailiff and his Provost that the ladies were to be provided with fish on the Friday and Saturday before the Feast of St. Giles (1 Sept.), and on the Wednesday following. The last mention of her that I have found belongs to the following year. In the course of a long statement of the expenses of the Hospice produced by the ill-fated Brother Adam de Warfeld for the year Michs. 1298—Michs. 1299[4] comes this entry: "in diuersis unguentis pro matre domini iiij.s. viij.d.". So she may have fallen ill at Islip; and the time would be November or December, 1298. But the absence of an expenditure for her funeral is a presumption that she recovered and returned to Wenlock. A son who had cared for her comforts as Wenlok did would miss her when at last she passed away.

Thereafter the Abbot's attentions were centred on his sister, whose name is not known,[5] and of whom we chiefly

[1] These are two monks of the House (see *Monks of Westminster*, pp. 57, 67). John de Wenlok may have been the Abbot's nephew; he was certainly at Westminster from 1296 to 1323-34. Robert de Sancto Martino, or Marttin, was professed about 1272 and died in 1317.

[2] *Mun.* 31349. [3] *Mun.* 31363. [4] *Mun.* 24502, 11½ feet × 10 in.

[5] See note on p. 64.

hear between 1305 and 1307. In 1305-6 she was at Sawbridgeworth, and the Provost of Eye laid out threepence for the carriage of a letter from the Abbot to her at that place.[1] But the Provost of Todenham,[2] Glos, was also brought into the arrangements for this visit; for he sent two men and three horses with a cart to seek the Abbot's sister at "Kydelmenstre," at a cost of 1s. 2d., whereas it cost but 4d. to provide a man, who borrowed the rector of Todenham's horse, to take the lady on to Denham; and from there she probably passed to Sawbridgeworth; the Provost also enters six bushels of corn as provender for these horses. We get an interesting instance in connexion with this visit of the way in which Wenlok's letters are substantiated by the account-rolls. We have a mandate[3] to Brother John de Wenlok and to Gilbert Grayling, Provost of Eye, that they are to deliver wheat for the sister's bread to "Dan Peter de la Croys de Pere,"[4] and that the cost shall be allowed on account. The date is 28 March, 1306, and we may assume that she was then at Westminster, or near it, for Wenlok wrote the missive at his manor of Paddington. But also we can trace the execution of this order, for we have the account-roll for 1305-6 of the manor of Eye,[5] and in it is the entry: "liberat' fratri Petro ad Crucem Lapideam ad opus sororis domini Abbatis ij bz. per breve". Apparently she stayed on as her brother's guest, and on 24 April, 1307, there was an outlay of 13s. 7d. upon eight ells of cloth for her handmaid.[6] Meantime, she had gone into lodgings, and the horror with which Wenlok realised that there had been a failure to pay the rent is described elsewhere in the terms of a letter which he wrote on 25 July, 1307, in order to put things right.[7] The point for us is that things were actually put right; for in his Treasurer's compotus for 1306-7[8] there is a payment of 4s. for two quarters' rent of the

[1] *Mun.* 26871. [2] *Mun.* 25936. [3] *Mun.* 31401.
[4] Cf. *Monks of Westminster*, p. 70. [5] *Mun.* 26871.
[6] *Mun.* 31479, 24257. [7] p. 51 f. [8] *Mun.* 24257.

house of Gunnilde Lawes, that being the name of the landlady mentioned in the letter. Alas! death deprived the Abbot of his sister's society, as the summer wore on, for the same account, which closed at Michaelmas, includes a payment of £4 2s. 7½d. "in exequiis sororis domini".

Wenlok's niece Alice may have been a daughter of the deceased lady, for we only come upon gifts for Alice's clothing and maintenance at the probable time of the sister's death. We have a roll of the Abbot's Treasurer's charges for the period 29 September—24 December, 1307,[1] in which record is kept of some not inconsiderable outlays upon finery—18 ells of coloured cloth ("blodii")[2] for £3; half a "pannus" of green for £2 10s. 6d.; "j pana de menyuer et j penula de Bysches"[3] for £3 3s. 5d. The Abbot also charged himself with her maintenance, perhaps from the time of her mother's death; so there is an entry in the same account for the payment of 13s., at the rate of 1s. a week, to Dame Agnes de Wycumbe in respect of the fact that Alice stayed with her from the feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross to St. Thomas's Day (14 Sept. to 21 Dec.), 1307. We shall find that the Abbot died on 25 December, and we might assume that the niece stayed on for the funeral and then returned to Wenlock; but Henry Payn, the Abbot's Treasurer, records an interesting payment of 20 florins to William of Angmotesham (Amersham, Bucks) "in plenam solucionem maritagii neptis domini"; so that one of Wenlok's last concerns was to provide for his niece's portion.

We also know of two nephews. In April, 1306, Wenlok ordered[4] his Provost at Staines to pay 4s. 6d. to Dame Aubrey de Graueney, being the Easter term's rent of the land of the Abbot's nephew. Comparing this order with another,[5] dated 19 May, 1306, for the payment of 13s. 4d.

[1] *Mun.* 24260.

[2] Used of Garter Blue; of. Hope and Atchley, *English Liturgical Colours*, 4, 252.

[3] Cf. Du Cange, s.v. Bissus. [4] *Mun.* 31412. [5] *Mun.* 31421.

to Geoffrey de la Dune for arrears of rent of land held by the Abbot's nephew John, and with yet another,[1] dated 20 July of the same year, in which there is reference to some business at Staines connected with John Verrer, the Abbot's nephew, we arrive at all we know of one of the two. The other was William de Wenlok, for whom, in an undated mandate,[2] the Abbot ordered his Seneschal to provide a robe of blue or burnet or "Candlewykestrete"; perhaps we may identify him with William, son of Adam de Wenlok, to whom a sum of 15s. 7½d. was to be paid by the agents at Pershore,[3] together with anything that he and his friends might need on their journey and on their return. It is not at once obvious that this William de Wenlok is identical with the "clerk" of that name, to whom in 1297-98 the Convent Treasurers paid a year's pension of £5.[4] We have receipts from the Abbot to the Treasurers (not, be it noted, from William himself) for instalments of £2 each to Easter, 1297, and Michaelmas, 1297,[5] in which the Abbot speaks of him simply as William de Wenlok, clerk; and no explanation is given to show why this clerk should be receiving this annual payment through the Abbot out of the Convent's portion. But the next receipt,[6] dated *c.* 13 October, 1298, is for the instalment due at Michaelmas of that year, and it definitely speaks of William as "our nephew". So it is lawful to guess that the Abbot was helping his young relative, clerk though he might be, to a little learning. For in the same month of October, 1298, we find his own Treasurers[7] paying the wages of a groom with one horse, "ducentis nepotem domini de Insula apud Oxon circa festum sancti Edwardi," and presently there is in the same roll the pathetic gift of 1s. "cuidam pauperi scolari informanti nepotem domini apud Oxon". Apparently the young man advanced in sound learning, for our chartulary[8] incorporates a notification

[1] *Mun.* 31438. [2] *Mun.* 31556. [3] *Mun.* 31596; no date.
[4] *Mun.* 19838. [5] *Mun.* 29025, 29034. [6] *Mun.* 29065 (see p. 64).
[7] *Mun.* 24502. [8] Domesday, f. 478*b*.

from Richard de Gravesend, Bishop of London, that on the presentation of the Abbot and Convent of Westminster, the patrons, he has admitted William de Wenlok, clerk, to the rectory of St. Magnus, London Bridge, and instituted him at Croydon on 21 April, 1300. We find no more receipts for the pension after this.

But there were remoter relations to whom Wenlok was equally loyal. A certain Mestre Adam de Karewell and some other kinsfolk of the Abbot were evidently making a journey in October, 1296, and they may have started from Westminster. For Wenlok wrote[1] thence to his Provost at Staines that the party were to have what they needed for one night and that the "reasonable costs" thereof might be entered on his account. From an undated mandate[2] we can gather that they passed on to Islip, it being ordered that Master Adam should receive from the Provost of that manor three quarters of coal, two cartloads of wood and two trusses of litter, as if the travellers were making some little stay. Then there is a certain Roger de Prestendene, who is described as "nostre parent" in the course of an order[3] that, being at Denham, he should receive a quarter of oats from the local store. Ten years earlier Brother Reymund de Wenlok, as Warden of the Hospice, noted in his account[4] a gift of three shillings to Roger at Towcester "per preceptum Abbatis"; while a similar roll of the same year,[5] records first a gift of twelvepence "Rogero de Prestendone clerico" and then one of four shillings to the same person "scolasticanti apud Oxon," which makes his case very similar to that of Wenlok's nephew William. Roger, too, received help from the Convent, but in the shape of a corrody, from which he released the House in a document[6] dated 1309 and now barely decipherable. The right, he says, was given to him "ex dono bone memorie domini Walteri de Wenlacke" and of the Convent of their own special grace, and it consisted of

[1] *Mun.* 31337. [2] *Mun.* 31509. [3] *Mun.* 31347 = Mar., 1297.
[4] *Mun.* 24492. [5] *Mun.* 24259. [6] *Mun.* 31754.

a livery of one servant in the Abbey, a daily portion of bread called "moynebred" and a "gassio" of second beer called "moyneale".[1] The parchment is endorsed: "Relaxacio Rogeri Prestendene de j liberacione j^us^ seruientis". Thus while William de Wenlok, his nephew, received help from the Convent in hard cash, Roger, his relative, was given a right to food from the Convent for his household, and it may be added that the corrody was a more recognised custom than the gift of money.

Lastly, there is a certain Cristine de Euesham—"nostre cosine"—about whom on the Wednesday after St. Edward's Day, 1296, Wenlok sends word[2] from Eye to Islip that she is to have hay and oats for two horses for one night, as if she had been permitted to be at Westminster to see how the great high day was kept. She was also entertained at Islip in the following year, one quarter of wheat, one of barley, and one of rye being placed at her disposal.[3] But from September, 1297, onwards the Abbot found her a home, not on any of his manors, but with the Lady of Stodleye, or Studley, in county Warwick, Dame Ysabele de Compton, to whom he ordered[4] his Provost at Islip to pay fivepence weekly for Christine's maintenance till further notice, besides procuring for her a surcoat with a furred hood for five shillings.

Here, then, is a man who, as we shall see, could struggle for what he believed to be his rights against his best friends among the brethren of his House, but who would not let it be doubted that he was a faithful and affectionate son, a generous brother, one who in his lofty station maintained a benevolent interest in his kinsfolk, and who was always ready with a present for any one who came from Wenlock in Shropshire.

Page 49. *Mun.* 28582*.

Pateat vniuersis . . . quod ego Willelmus de Clune filius Hugonis de Clùne recepi et habui a venerabili patre Wal-

[1] i.e. monk-bread and monk-ale.

[2] *Mun.* 31334. [3] *Mun.* 31368. [4] *Mun.* 31366.

tero permissione diuina Abbate Westm. per manus fratris Alexandri de Persore liberantis quadraginta marcas . . . pro terra mea de Sponhulle in parte solucionis pro terra quam Agneti dicte la Specere de Wenlok matri eiusdem Abbatis vendidi. Recepi eciam ab eodem per manus dicti fratris A. nomine Cristiane uxoris mee quinque marcas sterlingorum pro recognicione quadam ab eadem Cristiana de dicta terra nostra de Sponhulle in Curia domini Regis apud Westm. facta. Et pro bladis in eadem terra de Sponhulle tempore confeccionis presencium crescentibus ac per me seminatis sexaginta solidos necnon et pro expensis meis et dicte Cristiane . . . versus Westm vnam marcam argenti secundum conuencionem inter nos super hiis initam recepi. de quibus quinquaginta marcis et dimidio in summa dictum dominum Abbatem quietum clamo. . . . Dat' apud Westm. [14 Feb., 1290].

Page 49. *Mun.* 28853.

Pateat vniuersis . . . quod ego Willelmus filius Hugonis de Clune recepi de Agnete que fuit vxor Philippi le Espicer de Wenlak per manus magistri Roberti de Bruges viginti et tres solidos et quattuor denarios in partem solucionis Centum et quinque solidos et quattuor denarios in quibus eadem Agnes mihi tenebatur pro blado et vtensilibus sibi venditis apud Sponhulle. . . . Dat' apud Sutton iuxta Brayles die dominica in festo clausi pasche anno . . . xviii° (9 April, 1290).

Page 49. *Mun.* 28865.

Pateat vniuersis . . . quod ego Willelmus de Cloune filius Hugonis de Cloune recepi et habui ab Agnete que fuit vxor Philippi le Especer de Wenlok per manus fratris Alexandri de Persore monachi Westm. liberantis iiij li . . . pro bladis et vtensilibus eidem Agneti apud Sponhulle venditis. De qua quidem pecunie summa dictam Agnetem quietam clamo. . . . Dat' apud Wenlok in crastino sancti Iacobi apostoli anno . . . xviij° (26 July, 1290).

Page 52. *Mun.* 31494.

Salutem et graciam. quia soror nostra mansit in domo Guneldi Lauwes per aliquot tempus per conuencionem factam inter ipsam et fratrem J. de Wenlok de qua penitus ignoramus, tibi mandamus quod vocatis partibus diligenter inquiras si dictus J. de Wenlok dicte mulieri pro domo sua in aliquo satisfecit et si quid a retro fuerit dicte mulieri in

presencia dicti fratris satisfacias minus dilate, ne post recessum sororis fiat murmur vel tumultus inter vicinos de sua perhendinacione quod absit. et tibi allocabitur per presentes. Datum apud Denham die sabbati proxima post festum sancti Iacobi Apostoli Anno regni regis E. trecesimo quinto (c. 25 July, 1307).

Page 56. *Mun.* 31540.

Salutem et graciam. Quia mandauimus matri tue quod veniat cum matre nostra ad nos apud Suttone in crastino sancti Johannis baptiste instanti volumus quod venias ad nos ibidem super equos nostros de pannis non curans. prouideas nobis de iiij li. drageti et iiij li. pulueris albi ac iiij firmaculis aureis pretio j marce et tecum deferas. et si Johannes de Wenlac vel Robertus de sancto martino de vectura poterint sibi prouidere volumus quod tecum veniat. ceterum si que nobis sunt necessaria prouidere cures circumspecte. vale.

Page 57.

An entry in the *Year Book of Edward I*, 1293 (*Rolls Series*, p. 254), seems to imply that Wenlok had another sister called Cecily, who before then had died in the Abbey. The passage is obscure. There is no reference to such a sister in any of his account-rolls, as far as I know; nor is she mentioned in the indulgence (p. 49) among the members of his family for whom prayers are asked. As far as I can gather, he did not usually bring his family to reside within the precincts, and the suit in question was a contention about money, which is unlike Wenlok, where his relations are concerned. I owe the reference to the Rev. H. F. Westlake.

Page 60. *Mun.* 29065.

Pateat universis per presentes quod nos W. permissione diuina Abbas Westm. recepimus de fratribus Willelmo de Watford et [Henrico de Wanetyn]ge Thesaurariis Conuentus nostri quadraginta solidos sterlingorum pro pensione annua Willelmi de Wenlok clerici nepotis nostri de termino sancti Michaelis [anno r]egni Regis Edwardi vicesimo sexto De quibus quadraginta solidis fatemur nos plenarie esse sol[utos] et predictum Conuentum nostrum per presentes esse quietos. Datum apud Westm. die Jouis proxima post festum [sancti Ed]wardi anno supradicto (c. 13 Oct., 1298).

CHAPTER V.

THE ABBATIAL ESTATES.

THE monastic muniments of the Abbey are, it cannot be too often repeated, a business collection. They are there because the Convent maintained an elaborate and well-conducted organisation. Both the Abbot on his part and the Prior and brethren on their part had large territorial responsibilities, and the first requisite in such a case was a sound system of management. Thus the smallest documents relating to these affairs, such as orders to pay and acquittances for sums received, were carefully docketed, but private and personal matters were, as a rule, not laid up in store. So the Abbots as a class have not left us their personal or general correspondence. We have a few letters of Nicholas de Litlington and William de Colchester on Abbey matters, and that is practically all. But Walter de Wenlok—we should like to know why—is a notable exception. Some one in his time made it a rule that the "precipes" for the multitudinous activities of an Abbot's organisation should be kept and not destroyed. The result is that we have a collection of 337 such letters,[1] nearly all of them beginning with his name and style, and only a few being sent forth by others under his authority. No date is appended in the case of 108 of them, though here and there we can supply the omission, within whatever limits; for example, the Abbot sends an undated mandate[2] to John Churchwyne, the Provost of his manor of Eye, to deliver to Dan Aleyn de Lechton two quarters of good wheat, which had been lent by him to the Abbot's

[1] *Mun.* 31271-31607. [2] *Mun.* 31526.

hostel in time of need, and we know that Alan of Leyton was a monk of Westminster in 1291 (and probably earlier), and that he died in 1300[1]; further, it appears from some manor accounts that he was Convent Granger in 1291-92,[2] and apparently he held the same office in 1295-97,[3] and it would be natural that as such he should oblige the Abbot by a loan of some wheat belonging to the Convent's portion, and that the Abbot should on that account be particularly careful to repay it. Or again, here is an undated instruction[4] from the Abbot that his receivers or accountants are to pay a series of sums of money to Brother Alexander de Persore to be by him disbursed to various claimants, such as 40s. to his tailor, Walter de Wenlok—for the Abbot patriotically bought his clothes from a fellow-townsman and a namesake; an old debt of 20s. to J. Salsarius of Flete, i.e. Fleet Street; and £30 to merchants in part payment of £46 13s. 4d. lent by them in foreign parts. Two monks besides Brother Alexander are mentioned in the course of the document. One is John de Sutton, who is paid £20; the other is W. de Knolle, who is concerned with the purchase of twenty shillings' worth of under-linen for the Abbot. Now, our only knowledge of Knolle with a date to it relates to clothing bought for him by the Abbot's Treasurer in 1306-07[5]; but the mention of Brother John de Sutton decides the question in favour of a much earlier date; for in May, 1286, he was "tenens locum Abbatis," while the Abbot himself was across the seas[6]; it may have been then[7] or during his long sojourn in France in 1291 that he borrowed from the merchants, and now on his return he

[1] *Monks of Westminster*, p. 73.
[2] *Mun.* 26033.
[3] *Mun.* 26681, 27294, 8786.
[4] *Mun.* 31541.
[5] Cf. *Monks of Westminster*, p. 76.
[6] Domesday, f. 500; cf. 24492.
[7] Wenlok's absence abroad in 1286 was not as prolonged as that of 1291, for he was at Westminster, 25 March, 1286 (*Mun.* 31271), and at Laleham, 15 September (*Mun.* 31272); but he was also in France in the following year, for his statute on Divine Service was dated at Orleans, 19 June, 1287 (Domesday, f. 641*b*).

partly discharges the debt and entrusts a considerable sum to de Sutton on other business. John de Sutton is not heard of after 1289.[1] There is no difficulty in assuming that Brother W. de Knolle was a monk of Westminster twenty years earlier than the only other mention of him had led us to suppose. Several other undated letters of Wenlok's can be placed by similar means, more or less, in their proper context.

The 229 letters which bear dates range from 25 March, 1286, to 21 September, 1307, three months before Wenlok's death. Seventeen out of the twenty-three years of his reign are represented, but the incidence of the letters is very uneven; for six of these seventeen years have only one each, while others are heavily charged with material. There are twenty-one for 1295, thirty-three for 1296, thirty for 1297, and twenty-four for 1298, during all of which years the Abbot's receivers were Brothers Alexander de Persore and Richard de Fanelore. There are ten for 1305, when the office was held by Reginald de Hadham and Roger de Aldenham, and in view of the great fight against the Abbot in which these two took the chief part it is legitimate to suppose that their association with his affairs—and it was, of course, the result of his own choice—was marked by some sharp paroxysm, whose effects lasted long after he was dead. The richest year is 1306, which has seventy-nine letters, representing every month of it except January, and there are twenty-eight for 1307. During these last two years his affairs were in the capable hands of Brother Henry Payn, who at the same time held the most potent of Convent offices, that of Sacrist[2]; so he was managing the Abbot and the Abbey at the same time.

These letters are, of course, very small parchments, of almost uniform size, about 5 ins. × 1¼ ins. Some are sealed in green or red; in many cases the seal has been torn away. One[3] may be described as still unopened, the

[1] *Monks of Westminster*, p. 54.
[2] Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 71.
[3] *Mun.* 31445.

address "Fratri H. Payn" being sewn on over the Abbot's seal, which, however, is torn away. It is merely an order to his lordship's receiver to provide him with eight quarters of great salt for his larder and four quarters of small salt. It is dated at Denham on the octave of St. Peter ad Vincula (8 Aug.), 1306. Another,[1] dated at the same manor-house on the Saturday after St. James the Apostle's Day, in 1307, shows the official use to which these little missives were put and the form in which they were circulated. It is the Abbot's "precipe" to Henry Payn, now Sub-Prior, to send him 4s., being the half-fee of Thomas de Langeford, the lay guardian of his establishment, and half-fees for Walter his pantryman, Ralph his chamberlain, Marmaduke, or Marduk, and Roger, his palfreymen, and Hugh the boy in the kitchen; the amount for these is not specified, but it was probably 2s. apiece. The money was to be delivered to the bearer, sealed with the Sub-Prior's seal. But some one (perhaps Alexander de Persore) has noted on the back the sums paid to each servant, and it is added that the missive thus detailed was directed to the Sub-Prior under cover of another letter, which was sealed with my lord's ring in the presence of Brother Alexander de Persore on the Sunday before "Aduincula Petri". Or, as a last general instance, we may take the letter[2] which bears the latest date, 21 September, 1307. It goes into less financial detail than is usual, but it is significant of the general system. In this case Henry Payn is to deliver to Brother William de Curtlington (himself a future Abbot, 1315-33) and Thomas de Langeford, who were in charge of his hospice, such money as they need, and to do so by tally; also to pay his debts to various merchants in the markets at Westminster for clothes and furs that have been bought there under the direction of William Merre, his Seneschal; as to other payments Payn is to take counsel with Brother Alexander de Persore, the Abbot's chief confidant, and with the Seneschal aforesaid, and my

[1] *Mun.* 31492. [2] *Mun.* 31499.

lord will allow on account all that is thus expended and also whatever is given to the poor for the honour and weal of the Abbot and his church. It is the kind of letter a man writes who does not wish to be too precise with his servants, and yet knows that sufficient methods exist for checking their uses of his money and goods. It may be added that while most of the letters are in Latin, a few are in Norman-French.

Our first impression, then, on examining such a collection, is that we are dealing with a man whose interests and responsibilities are many and wide-spread. Practically all his properties in different parts of England are represented in these instructions. There is first his estate near Westminster—for he rarely lay within the Abbey itself. This was known as Eia, or Eye, or Insula, or L'Hyle, or Hylle; and near it was a manor-house called La Neyte.[1] In years when the letters are at all plentiful, e.g. 1296, 1297, 1306, we can realise that he so arranged his many journeys as to be at La Neyte in the middle of October, and no doubt his progress from the manor-house to the Abbey Church on St. Edward's Day was something of a function in itself. Thus on St. Edward's Day, 1296, he finds time to give instructions[2] for buying a horse for his cook, Thomas de Dene, and the letter is dated at Westminster. On 14 October, 1297, he is there again, and from there he orders payment (16 marks) to be made for some land which he has bought at Pershore.[3] In 1306 we find letters dated at Westminster on 15, 16, and 18 October,[4] doubtless from the same cause. But La Neyte or Eyte is an estate as well as a residence. One of its problems is the upkeep of the river frontage, and the earliest dated letter refers to this. Brother John de Sutton and the clerk Elyas, who are in charge at Eye, are to allow one Thomas atte Noneue half a quarter of wheat on the Feast of the Annunciation, 1286, as his wage while employed on

[1] Cf. H. F. Westlake, *Westminster*, pp. 6-8.
[2] *Mun.* 31332. [3] *Mun.* 31372. [4] *Mun.* 31455-8.

the repair of the walls,[1] under the direction of a young monk, Thomas de Lenton; while an undated letter,[2] which can fairly be ascribed to the same period, urges Brother Thomas to see that this important work is steadily pursued; he must not allow the carpenters to be taken off from the "reparacio wallorum" to any other tasks whatsoever; he need not mind about the outhouses and the like, but must carry on the wall-work during the summer season. The Convent, as distinct from the Abbot, also had its "wallatores," whose wages were included in the Treasurers' accounts.[3]

The Eye estate, of which we have a fair number of annual account rolls, was good grass and corn land, though sometimes it was necessary to send up supplies of cereals from other properties; thus in 1293 the Abbot's bailiff at Staines was ordered to deliver to John Churchwyne, his Provost at Eye, 40 quarters of barley for seed and for the rations of thirteen servants from Easter to St. Peter ad Vincula, at the rate of one bushel a week for each servant; the mandate[4] is endorsed to the effect that 38 quarters were actually delivered and that Thomas Juuene of Laleham was paid 3s. 2d. for cartage to "the Isle". The threshers, when it came to their turn, fared as the other servants; an undated order[5] to "Frere Reginald de Haddham" and the Provost of Eye bids them have the Eybury corn threshed, and give the threshers one bushel of corn weekly during their sojourn. On the other hand, when the Abbot sends[6] Henry his palfreyman to act as an extra hand in carrying the corn at La Neyte, his wage is to be 2d. a day, and Hadham and the Provost are to give him good advice as to how best to defend himself and guard his master's property by night and by day. To the last Wenlok was watchful about the details of this manor. In 1306 we find him issuing instructions[7] to Gilbert

[1] *Mun.* 31271; cf. 31333.
[2] *Mun.* 31555.
[3] E.g. 1304-5; *Mun.* 19841.
[4] *Mun.* 31281.
[5] *Mun.* 31594.
[6] *Mun.* 31591.
[7] *Mun.* 31414.

Grayling, who has succeeded John Churchwyne, about the erection of the windmill, the pantry and the buttery; and the servants are to lend a hand with the thatching under the direction of John, the keeper of the thatch-straw. Eye was also a useful centre from which to make compliments to important folk in town; e.g. Gilbert Grayling has orders to deliver to the bearer of *Mun.* 31423 one rood of grass from the meadow of Eye for the horses of Walter of the Chapel Royal, a dignitary who a few days later receives by the hands of Brother John de Butterle a present of one mark. But Eye's principal use, we may repeat, was to provide the Abbot with a residence in or near town, which made him independent of accommodation in the Abbey; and hence the importance of an injunction [1] to Henry Payn, 25 May, 1306, to pay 20s. to Master John de Offyntone for repairs done to the Abbot's bed. Nicholas de Litlington and John Islip, perhaps the greatest of his successors, both died at La Neyte.

Wenlok's most frequent habitat outside London was his manor of Denham, Bucks, and he would generally stay a night at his house at Paddington on the way thither. Thus having perhaps spent Christmas, 1295, at Westminster, he is found dating a letter [2] at Denham on the last day of the year, and he is still there on 24 February.[3] Practically he divided his time from then to August between Westminster and Denham, but the division was much in favour of Denham. And he quite recognised that others might take the same pleasure in visiting the place; indeed, there is an order [4] to his Provost of Denham to make provision for the Prior, his retinue, and his horses, and to give them all that they need during their stay; it is dated at Westminster on St. Milburg's day, 1306, at a time when, to judge from the grievous story to be told later, the Abbot did not regard Reginald de Hadham, his deposed Prior, in any friendly light. Another visitor who arrived shortly afterwards in the middle of July, 1306, was Sir John de

[1] *Mun.* 31424. [2] *Mun.* 31307. [3] *Mun.* 31308-12. [4] *Mun.* 31397.

Suthle, Edward I's Chamberlain, and word[1] goes forth from "the Hyle" near Westminster to the Denham Provost that the great man must be courteously welcomed, must be provided with hay, oats, litter and fuel, and must receive a present of 24 loaves in two bags, 12 gallons of good beer, and a six-gallon jar for his servants. Clearly it was a pleasant, well-found and well-stocked place. We have a letter[2] in which the Provost is commanded to receive "Mestre Roger le Gardiner" whom the Abbot is sending that he may lay out and tend the garden as he shall see to be most profitable; the Provost must find him reasonable sustenance during his stay there and provide such labour as he requires. Denham has a chapel and a garderobe and a great chamber; for there are arrangements[3] for supplying timber to keep these in repair, and the same letter orders a supply of corn for the Abbot's swans. There is also sufficient game to employ a warrener, and this officer and the Provost are told[4] to "bag" the Abbot's partridges in their bailiwick. But besides the amenities of the place and its sport there are its directly productive uses. It has good corn-land and at harvest-time—the morrow of the Gules of August, 1306—the Abbot sends down Rauf, his baker at Eye, to be an extra reaper, at the usual 2d. a day.[5] Or the harvest is safely gathered in and threshing is at hand and the time has come for another sowing. It is the morrow of the Holy Rood (15 Sept.); so he is despatching to the Provost his valet, Richard de Byrchest[6] (Birchurst) who is to be in attendance upon the threshers at his granges. It would be well to order two locks for these granges; let Richard keep one key and the Provost the other, and let Richard join the Provost at his table, until the Abbot himself

[1] *Mun.* 31437.

[2] *Mun.* 31346 = 23 February, 1297.

[3] *Mun.* 31410 = 10 April, 1306.

[4] *Mun.* 31340.

[5] *Mun.* 31443.

[6] This Richard de Birchurst was with his master during most of his sojourn in France and was sent home from "Funtaynes" (? Fontainebleau) with several others in September, 1291; cf. *Mun.* 24500 and see p. 126.

arrives, which, God willing, will be quite soon. Then as to the seed-sowing, my lord would like to know whether it will be better to buy seed-corn for Staines, Yeoveney and Laleham manors from outside or to supply it from Denham.[1] Wenlok has a larderer or cook at Denham named Thomas de Dene,[2] whom he trusts to buy a black horse for use in his carts,[3] but at the same time he looks to his Provost to select the meat that Thomas de Dene is to prepare for his table; let the Provost, he writes (13 April 1297),[4] take out of his stock three heifers of the smallest weight and fatten them for the kitchen, charging the reasonable cost thereof on his account. Once more Denham was, as it were, the final stage in the journey to London of freight of various kinds from more distant manors, especially from what were called the "partes occidentales," that is the abbatial properties in Gloucestershire and Worcestershire. Hence a mandate[5] to "Sire William" (the local parson), his Bailiff, and to his Provost at Islip that the wool which was coming through to them from "the West" was to be by them transported at the Abbot's charges to Denham. The matter was important enough for the sending of a special messenger from Westminster, August, 1297, who was to be given his expenses for himself and his horse.

Laleham and Staines and Yeoveney may be added as the sites of other abbatial territory near London, and the records of Wenlok's journeys show that they were all visited in their turn. There were vines at Laleham which had two shillings' worth of attention in 1295,[6] and we have seen that the place could supply "the Isle" with a considerable amount of corn, if need required. At one time Wenlok wrote[7] from Denham (4 April, 1306) to the Bailiff and the Provost to say that the property was not doing

[1] *Mun.* 31588 (no year).
[2] ? afterwards a monk, cf. *Monks of Westminster*, p. 68.
[3] *Mun.* 31307. [4] *Mun.* 31348. [5] *Mun.* 31357.
[6] *Mun.* 31287. [7] *Mun.* 31405.

all that it might; there was more land in it than could be properly worked; so let them make a requisition for more ploughs, as they may "see to be best for his profit and their honour". Laleham, like Denham, was a clearing-house for stock from elsewhere. So the Abbot, being there on 6 December, 1296, arranged[1] that its Provost should receive the poultry that was due to come up from other manors and find keep for it; he should also fatten four pigs for Christmas; and, as the Abbot's visit had revealed a need for the repair of the houses and "other ill things in the kitchen and elsewhere," the Bailiff should have all this put right. There is no reference to it in the letters, but a compotus of 1290-91[2] shows that boat-building was, as we should expect, one of the necessities of life at Laleham. It does not tell us much about the size of the property, that horse-shoeing there cost 2s. a year; but it is on record[3] that "Huwe," the Bailiff, received on 4 April, 1306, 6s., being three years' arrears of his costs in respect of shoeing the farm-horses. Of Staines there is little mention, save that in February, 1296, its Bailiff, Nicholas de Stubbing, received the rather large sum of 43 marks from the Abbott's treasury,[4] no doubt to pay for improvements of some kind, and that in the same year the Seneschals of Eye were told[5] to send to Staines an ox that needed change of air; it was to have good provender, and on occasion it could help with the harrow and in other ways.

Another favourite property within easy reach of London, frequently visited by Wenlok, and the scene of his death, was Piriford, or Pyrford, in Surrey. Wenlok, being about to proceed thither in June, 1293, sends a written warning[6] to the Bailiff and to the Provost to have a supply of oats ready for the provender of his horses, namely, half a bushel a night for each horse, with one and a half bushels in addition for his palfreys; he does not say how many horses

[1] *Mun.* 31341. [2] *Mun.* 27110. [3] *Mun.* 31407.
[4] *Mun.* 31309. [5] *Mun.* 31339. [6] *Mun.* 31282.

he will have in his train nor for how long his sojourn would be. In 1297 he was evidently somewhat anxious about the condition of the place, for from Sutton-under-Brailes, Warwickshire,[1] he ordered his two agents at Pyrford to remedy all defects in the houses and to have two new sluices made, lest there should be great peril of water in the winter. At another time, not specified, they were told[2] to pay 50s. for a new grange or barn to one John Pleyndeamour and to get a house built for the Abbot's warrener. Coming thither from Westminster, where he had spent the last Christmas Day before that on which he died, his watchful eye noticed that the box in which the chalice was kept at Pyrford needed a lock; so he issued a "precipe" for the 3½d. which would provide one.[3]

If we judge by the dates of the letters, Walter de Wenlok preferred Denham to Islip. But Islip had its advantages and was in many ways a statelier place. If it was farther from Westminster, it was close to Oxford, which was not only a social centre but a good place for shopping.[4] For the social side we must look to the account-rolls of his Seneschals and can take an instance that came quite early in his reign. In the course of a long journey, which began at Michaelmas, 1286,[5] and which touched Westminster only for the keeping of St. Edward's Day, he came on 9 November to Islip. Two friends of his were in Oxford at the moment, James de Ispan', Archdeacon of Wells, and the Dean of St. Paul's (William de Montford). To them on the Sunday he despatched a number of cheeses. On Thursday, the 14th, Wenlok went over to Oxford to dine with the Archdeacon. On Sunday, 17 November, the Dean, the Archdeacon, Master T. de Lue, and many other clerks returned his visit at Islip, and we get the details of the provision made for them—wine (at a cost of 12s. 6d.); beer (12s. 3d.); 12 geese; 300 eggs; 12 partridges, besides

[1] *Mun.* 31364. [2] *Mun.* 31500. [3] *Mun.* 31471.

[4] He could send thither for a barber (1s. 6d.), *Mun.* 31365.

[5] *Mun.* 24490.

larks and plovers. The Archdeacon of Wells prolonged his visit over Tuesday, the 19th, when the lute-player of the King's Chancellor received 2s. for entertaining them; but it cost twice that sum to provide an electuary for the Abbot on the following Friday.

But Islip meant business quite as much as social entertainment, and the business was largely in the hands of Sir Richard the Chaplain, who was associated with the Provost of the estate. The farm is well stocked with pigs; the Bailiff and the Provost are bidden to deliver a pig to Gille, Master Robert de Leham's boy, and find him his keep for the rest of the year (15 Sep., 1293[1]); they are to pay pannage for the pigs which they have sent to Bistelesham or Bisham, Berks, at the rate of 2d. a head.[2] There are undated orders to the Provost to go in to "Oxneford" to procure bolting tubs for the bakery[3] and to buy there three empty tuns and send them with all speed—indeed, "by next Thursday,"—to Todenham, Gloucestershire, because the Abbot has a store of cider there to fill them.[4] Sometimes Wenlok turns to Islip in his need for money; witness a peremptory order[5] — not dated, but probably belonging to 1296, because it mentions Brother John de Wenlok as being in charge at Eye—that Parson Richard and the Provost are at once to raise £10 by a sale of wheat, barley and pease, and to forward the money to Westminster before Hockeday.[6] But the Islip establishment is also a forwarding agency like Denham; sometimes it sends things on to Denham as the next stage, sometimes straight to Westminster. We meet the cartage of wool again, only further back on its journey. There is an undated mandate[7] (which by comparing it with *Mun.* 31357, already quoted, we may refer to *c.* 1 Aug., 1297, as the Abbot himself had reached Islip by 9 Aug.), stating that 30 lb. of wool have been sent off from Sutton-under-Brailes in

[1] *Mun.* 31284. [2] *Mun.* 31318 = *c.* 25 May, 1296.
[3] *Mun.* 31528. [4] *Mun.* 31515. [5] *Mun.* 31514.
[6] Second Tuesday after Easter. [7] *Mun.* 31585.

the presence of the parson of the place. The lid is to be sealed and the key of the seal is to be sent on by the parson in the hands of the next messenger. The consignment should be delivered to the Abbot at Islip "this next Sunday". The same fate attends the poultry. Wenlok tells[1] the Chaplain and the Provost that there is a convoy on the way from "the West"—poultry and other livestock—and they are to pass them on to Denham with all speed, but not to tire them too much. Another incident of the same kind has more particulars. It is comprised first in an instruction[2] from John de Foxle that three dozen capons are coming to Islip from Bourton-on-the-Hill, Sutton-under-Brailes and Todenham, the Gloucestershire group of estates, and the Provost is to fatten them up till Dan Lorenz (i.e. Brother Laurence de Elinton)[3] or some one else on my lord's behalf sends for them. This is dated *c.* 19 May, 1297, at "Braye" in Berks, where Foxle and his family held lands from the King, and is followed on 6 June by an order[4] from Wenlok to the Provost that he is to give two servants their wages for three days and let them have horses with two nights' provender, and that so he is to ensure the conveyance of the poultry to Westminster, "avoiding blame". But, while he was thus looking after the supply of his own needs from and through Islip, Wenlok did not abate his watchful care of the estate. He urges[5] the Provost to get a good supply of seed corn and to sow the land speedily, because the time has come. Even natural courtesies to friendly dignitaries must yield to the exigences of the establishment. For instance, Master Gilbert de Suynefeld,[6] Chancellor of Hereford, is in Oxford and the Abbot has promised him wood, coal and litter for his feast; but Parson Richard and the Provost had better go to the Chancellor's residence

[1] *Mun.* 31517. [2] *Mun.* 31351.
[3] Cf. *Monks of Westminster*, p. 66. [4] *Mun.* 31352. [5] *Mun.* 31515.
[6] Le Neve, *Fasti*, i. 492, says that Gilbert de Swinfeud held this office, 20 January, 1287-1299. Our letter is not dated.

in Oxford and tell him to fetch these things with all speed, for the foresters will not permit cartage of wood or coal within fifteen days before and after St. John's Day. The Chancellor may, perhaps, also put in a request for thorns and twigs for making enclosures; if so, he may have four or five cartloads, but he must fetch them himself, as the Abbot's carts are engaged already in conveying wheat and other stock to Westminster.[1] Thus tended, Islip could at times lend a hand to other manors; as when it is arranged[2] that the entire hay-crop, except what is needed to feed the cattle in the place, shall be transferred to Sutton-under-Brailes. And equally Islip could be heartily put at the disposal of those who laboured in other manors. John de Foxle, on 30 September, 1297, being then at Pershore, forwards his lord's commands[3] to Islip that Sire William de Persore will reach there next Tuesday evening, and that the chamber is to be suitably furnished for him and he is to be given bread and beer and other like fare for his supper and oats for his horses. Let them ensure him as good a rest as they can. So we may leave Parson William of Pershore comparing notes with Parson Richard of Islip and blessing the kind master under whose roof they were met.

There is naturally less information to be gathered from the letters about the more distant properties. Pershore comes in at harvest-time and we see John de Foxle communicating[4] then from Westminster with the Provost, John Vypel, to the effect that the Abbot is sending Thomas le Keu to lend a hand at the August reaping and to see that the corn is well and neatly carried, receiving 1d. daily while he is there. But if Thomas le Keu is to keep an eye on the other reapers, the Provost must also keep an eye on Thomas le Keu. Let him not have man or horse within my lord's policies or at my lord's charges. Besides Pershore, there is a further Worcestershire group consisting

[1] *Mun.* 31516. [2] *Mun.* 31559. [3] *Mun.* 31371.
[4] *Mun.* 31356 = *c.* 25 July, 1297.

of Abbot's Morton, Longdon, and Chaddesley, where we get some light on the changing methods of paying wages to agricultural labourers. John de Foxle, being with the Abbot at Sutton-under-Brailes, 5 June, 1292, sends his lord's advice[1] to the managers of these estates that henceforth they are not to pay the Abbot's servants out of the crops growing in the fields, but in cash. This is now the custom, he says, of the neighbours in the same bailiwick, and my lord desires it to be adopted. A later Provost of these estates was evidently somewhat remiss in his finances, for there went forth a quite sharp reminder[2] to him from the Abbot to send up this term's rents and the arrears arising from sales of corn and other produce, "as he has so often told him to do".

The last group of properties is in Gloucestershire—Todenham, and Bourton-on-the-Hill, with Sutton-under Brailes, now on one side of the Warwickshire border and now on the other. The Abbot sends down Thomas Bissop from Denham to help get in the corn of Bourton parsonage, at the usual 2d a day.[3] When he was visiting the estate in March, 1302, his attention was called by Geoffrey the shepherd to the fact that the farm contained no hay that was of any good to the sheep; whereupon the Abbot gave orders that when the shepherd advised that the sheep needed it the Provost must provide for them pulse made of oats.[4] As these were the parts from which the convoy of wool came, it is not surprising to find provision[5] made for a visit from one William de Kayntone who was to re-shear the sheep, receiving his expenses and provender for his beast. At Todenham, as at Bourton, there was glebe-land; and we get a sight of the Abbot's instructions[6] to the Bailiff to cause the land of the Parson of Todenham as well as the Abbot's demesne to be harrowed, sown, prepared, and well manured.

[1] *Mun.* 31278-9.
[2] *Mun.* 31529.
[3] *Mun.* 31358 = 1 August, 1297.
[4] *Mun.* 31379.
[5] *Mun.* 31511.
[6] *Mun.* 31329 = *c.* 29 September, 1296.

But in such cases there are ecclesiastical obligations which a great ecclesiastic must by no means evade or overlook.

Paez, paez, dit le mot,
Si vis impetrare.

This is seen in a letter of unusual length[1] written during the octave of Epiphany, 1297, from Laleham to the Bailiff and the Provost of Todenham. The collectors of the contribution to the Cardinals[2] from the diocese of Worcester must be paid 44d., at the rate of 4d. for each of the 11 marks at which the church of Todenham is assessed. Procurations at the rate of so much per mark must also be delivered to the collectors of the Bishopric who were sent to St Edmundsbury. Further, there are the ordinaries requiring payment for senage and for visitations according to the custom of the country. The great thing is that the Abbot's agents, acting on the advice of the Chaplain of Todenham, should see to it that no person or church with which the Abbot is concerned should come under interdict through their default.

There is one more country place with which he had dealings, though it was not his property nor under his superintendence. If he visited it he could expect entertainment there, but its management was in other hands. This is the Abbey's cell, or daughter priory, of St. Mary at Hurley, Berks. But he could be its customer if not its controller, and it was from here that he purchased much of his fuel. Thus he sent a precept[3] from Denham *c.* 24 February, 1296, to Richard de Fanelore and Alexander de Persore, his Receivers, that they should hand 40s. to Brother Laurence de Elinton, his Chaplain and Seneschal, to be by him expended upon wood for the hospice at Westminster in "the parts of Hurle". Again, he gave his mandate[4] to the Provost and the Bailiff of "Estanes" (Staines), authorising

[1] *Mun.* 31344.
[2] Cf. p. 133, n. 2.
[3] *Mun.* 31312.
[4] *Mun.* 31339.

them to see to the carriage by water to Westminister of 2000 billets of wood which were lying ready for him at Hurley and to make sure that they arrive by the time of his return from the Parliament. This is dated on the Monday after the Feast of St. Simon and St. Jude in the following October, and it may refer to the material which Laurence de Elinton had bargained for in the previous February, though it was, perhaps, hardly our Abbot's custom to pay cash in advance of delivery.

It is the natural consequence of his absorption in the management of his estates, that the records of his doings take little account of the fabric of the Abbey, its church and its extensive buildings. The cost of maintenance in their case fell on the common funds of the House. But we have among the abbatial accounts an imperfect parchment[1] dealing with a piece of building in St. Margaret's churchyard, for which Wenlok must thus be assumed to have been responsible, and the erection of which was imposed upon him by the Convent before his actual election.[2] The heading of the document has gone, but the upper part of it has a reference to "anno xvij°," and mentions Alexander de Persore and Hamo de la Barre, a monk and a lawyer, who were Wenlok's constant associates; so we need have no hesitation in ascribing it to 1288-89. But it gives us the details of "[Expense cir]ca nouam domum constructam in Gardino sancte Margarite anno eodem," and these show that the undertaking was not on a large scale. He purchased 10s. worth of trees, and for the rest he relied on his own timber at Greenford, paying a carpenter 1s. to fell it, and paying 3s. for haulage to Brentford and 6d. for river-carriage from thence to Westminster. His laths came from Kingston, 2000 of oak and 1000 of beech. He needed 10,000 nails, 1000 sprig-nails, and 700 "bordnayls"; and the tiles numbered 21,000, besides 100 "tegule cauate". It was mainly carpenter's work, and the Abbot paid the foreman £3 for the job ("ad

[1] *Mun.* 24686. [2] Cf. p. 144.

tascham ") ; Maurice, the mason, received 5s. for making the foundation, and 16s. went to the man who did the plastering and tiling. The cost of the whole was £10 15s. 11d. It is probable that this was one of the houses occupied by the Skinners; the rent of it went to the support of the Sacrist's office.

In the course of the previous year Wenlok was building on a larger scale at his manor of Sutton-under-Brailes, where the masons started work on a new grange on 5 April, 1288.[1] At first five and then four masons were employed for eleven weeks ; they were helped by one or two underlings and by four quarrymen. Fourpence a week was the pay of a mason[2] ; the rest received their wages partly in cash and partly in kind ; thus a quarryman had a penny a week and a bushel of corn. In the eleventh week the four local masons were joined by four from Islip. On 24 May the stone-work had gone far enough for the wood-work to be begun. Master Robert, the carpenter, had a staff of four (wages about a penny a day), and W., the Islip carpenter, came over to help ; there were also two or three sawyers for several weeks, who likewise received every man a penny a day, but nothing in kind. In the middle of it all the lord Abbot came on a journey through the manors,[3] and spent eleven days at Sutton and Bourton, during which the workmen were taken off the job at the granary, in order to fulfil his commands as to other buildings on the estate. Master Robert, the carpenter, also received £2 13s. 4d. for making a grange at Todenham, and other work was done to the "long house" at Sutton. Clearly the Abbot was mindful of what was due to the right equipment of his farms, and we must put this to his credit before we complain that there is nothing to say as to what he did ten years later, when as the result of a fire in the

[1] *Mun.* 24494.

[2] "Item v Cementariis pro mercede secunde septimane xxd."

[3] "Quum Abbas uisitauit maneria Conuentus Westm."

King's Palace of Westminster a considerable portion of the monastic buildings suffered grievously. Mr. Rackham[4] searched diligently in the conventual account-rolls for any signs of a concerted effort to repair this damage, and the resulting references are very scanty. In any case such catastrophes must be faced in Chapter; they constituted no charge on the Abbot's portion.

Page 79. *Mun.* 31278.

Johannes de Foxle Ballivo et preposito de Langedon et Morton salutem. Quia per consilium domini mei W. Abbatis Westm. desideratum est quod blada in campis crescentia de cetero famulis in seruicio predicti domini mei existentibus nomine stipendiorum non liberentur Vobis ex parte domini mei predicti mando quod famulis in balliua vestra existentibus cuiuscunque condicionis fuerint huiusmodi blada seu alia nomine stipendiorum suorum de cetero non liberentur set eisdem in denariis pro stipendis suis rationabiliter satisfaciatis prout vicini uestri de vicineto Balliue uestre famulis suis satisfaciant (sic) et denarii vobis allocabuntur super compotum vestrum per hanc litteram. Dat' apud Sutton die Jovis proxima post festum sancte Trinitatis anno regni regis Edwardi xx [5 June, 1292].

[4] R. B. Rackham, *Building at Westminster Abbey*, 1298-1348.

CHAPTER VI.

THE ABBOT'S FRIENDS AND RETAINERS.

Our glance at Wenlok's letters has served to show what he was as a landlord, vigilant of small details, anxious that precious opportunities should not be missed, and resolute to make the lands productive. We must not expect to find the personal note struck in the course of these strictly official missives. Only once does he lapse from the rigidly matter-of-fact style into an earnestness that takes refuge in Holy Writ. The letter in question is unfortunately not only without date or place of origin; it also lacks an address, though, as in the course of it he orders a robe of "Candelwykestrete" cloth for his nephew, we may assume that the letter was destined for town. But there is reference in it to the erection of some houses, which is proceeding too slowly. Let this, says he, be hastened, "lest it be too late when the master of the house cometh presently to make a reckoning with his servants and to render to each one a fitting reward".[1]

The fact is, as, indeed, the reader will have gathered from the previous chapter, that a special and technical purpose attaches to these letters, and that its nature excludes either levity or digression. The basis of Abbey management is the annual account-roll of each functionary. Not merely the great Obedientiaries but the lesser servants —seneschals, provosts, bailiffs—must once in each year give an account of their stewardship. In fulfilling their office they are allowed a certain liberty and initiative in matters that they deem to be for "my lord's honour and

[1] *Mun*, 31556: "redditurus vnicuique dignam pro labore mercedem".

profit," but as a rule they must justify every item that they charge under the various heads of expenditure; and the custom was to add to each item the phrase "precepto Abbatis," or "per preceptum domini," or by command of some other authorised monk or official. When the provosts presented their compotus for acceptance, they must produce the precepts with it, and hence, no doubt, the preservation to this day of these little documents.

First, then, because no functionary can make payments or give presents without a voucher, these letters become a mine of information as to the servants by whom the Abbot was immediately surrounded, and as to his manner of treating them. He sends them, as we have seen, into the country at harvest-time, and there are other similar cases worthy of note. His valet, Nicholas de Wyft, goes off to Staines with a letter[1] ordering the Bailiff to admit the boy to the fields and pay him 2d. daily. Being at Islip on 9 August, 1297, Wenlok heard that there was a vacancy among the reapers in the western parts, and told James Rossel, the Bailiff, to expect Richard the palfreyman and to give him such work as he was fitted for, at 1½d. a day.[2] Apparently he had seven valets, and there is an order to purchase their furs for 14s.[3] But it cost more to provide them with a livery in cloth, for £1 17s. 6d. was paid to Brother William de Watford in 1296 for cloth "for the use of the Abbot's pages,"[4] whereas a greater servant, such as his confidential and highly valued Seneschal, William Merre or Merry, expected 24s. to be spent on his summer suit.[5] It is curious that among these letters there survives no order to spend money on physicians. Wenlok was apparently a healthy man, though he did not escape from the faculty altogether: for there are several entries in the account-rolls of his hospice such as the following, 1292-93:[6] "Delivered to Richard the apothecary two bushels 'per

[1] *Mun.* 31562.
[2] *Mun.* 31360.
[3] *Mun.* 31464 = 26 November, 1306.
[4] *Mun.* 31311.
[5] *Mun.* 31486 = 25 June, 1307.
[6] *Mun.* 26857.

breve'"; and if our collection were quite complete, we should be able to produce the "breve" in question. The full extent of his household retinue must be dealt with elsewhere and can be described in his own words.

But he was also served by a number of legal and technical helpers who could not be maintained at the light costs of a valet or a palfreyman. The chief of these was John de Foxle, his Seneschal, who seems to have held sway over all his manors and who must be paid up to the level of his responsibilities. He was also one of the most successful of the Abbot's servants, for from being the Abbot's land-agent he attained to the order of knighthood before the Abbot's death.[1] He appears in our account-rolls quite early in Wenlok's reign; for instance, in those of the manor of Todenham in 1285-86 and onwards,[2] where a receipt of money is vouched for "per testimonium Johannis de Foxle senescalli". The earliest mention of him in the Abbot's letters is in 1292,[3] and it is the first which survives of a series of orders to pay him his fee of 5 marks a term; it is dated at Sutton-under-Brailes, *c.* 3 May, and the term specified is the Easter just passed; so Foxle could hardly complain of being left much in arrear. There are other letters to the same purport and showing the same promptness. In one case[4] payment to him was permitted to fall behind; there is a "precipe" that he is to receive 51s. for arrears of his fee for 26 Edw. I (Nov. 1297—Nov. 1298), and in this instance we can trace the inclusion of the payment in the account-roll of the Abbot's Receivers for that year.[5] It is clear in other ways that he was a great man with his master, and honourable; for special affairs of various kinds were entrusted to him, notably some trouble in the county of Oxford, a part of the country

[1] I find him described as "miles" in *Mun.* 580 = 29 September, 1307, which is nearly eight years earlier than the date so far known for his knighthood (Tout, *Edw. II.*, p. 342).

[2] *Mun.* 25909 ff.

[3] *Mun.* 31277.

[4] *Mun.* 31377.

[5] *Mun.* 24255.

which he knew well; on 31 October, 1295, the Receivers were ordered[1] to disburse 20 marks to John de Foxle out of the treasury for expediting the Abbot's business in Co. Oxon, and a further sum of £10 for the same purpose was added a week later[2]; on the former of these there is a careful endorsement to the effect that there was no need to look for a formal receipt from Foxle, because he had accounted personally for his use of the money to his lord who was then "apud Insulam".

But we can furnish other information about this worthy knight besides the casual mention of him and of Constance his wife in these letters.[3] It appears from *Mun.* 4562 that in 1309 they held lands from the King at Bray and Benefeld (Binfield), Berks, and Bromeshulle (Bramshill), Co. Southampton, and from *Mun.* 4530 that in 1321 there was a royal licence given to John and his wife for emparking part of Windsor Forest at Bray. We may thus assume that by that time Foxle had prospered and was by no means dependent on the business that Walter de Wenlok could put in his way. But his status as a landowner can be traced further back. There is an account-roll[4] of the Abbot's hospice for the quarter beginning at Michaelmas, 1286. Towards the end of November, the establishment was at Islip. On Monday, 25th, the party moved on to Hurley and the Seneschal had no expenditure to record for that day, except three-farthings given in alms, because, according to a custom that was almost prescriptive, the Abbot could lie there for a night at St. Mary's Priory "sumptibus prioris eiusdem loci"; but the next night was equally free of cost to the Seneschal; he only had to enter "dominus apud Bray sumptibus Joh. Foxleye"; the great man had come there at the invitation and charges of his well-to-do servant. Fortunately, we have one of John de Foxle's own account-rolls[5] as Seneschal and we can gather from it the various ways in which the Abbot

[1] *Mun.* 31292. [2] *Mun.* 31296. (Cf. *Mun.* 15689 on p. 105.)
[3] *Mun.* 2516 = 1301. [4] *Mun.* 24490. [5] *Mun.* 24499.

took advantage of his legal capacities. The period of it is December, 1291—August, 1292, and we find that in February, 1292, John de Foxle and William de Bray, the notary, are engaged on the affairs of the Abbot's prison, ("pro Gaola Westm. deliberanda")[1]; three weeks later there is a view of frank-pledge to be taken, not to speak of the entertainment that must be offered in the interval to various officials of the Exchequer and the King's Bench.[2] It is evident that the Abbot was wise to have a man of these attainments at Westminster and to keep him there till he soared higher. Rather more than a year after Wenlok's death Foxle was appointed a Baron of the Exchequer (28 Feb., 1309) in the place of Roger de Hegham, and held office till he was succeeded by Roger Bellers (20 July, 1322). He was dead before 28 November, 1324.[3]

Another man who came to great place after being a member of Wenlok's miscellaneous retinue was John de Drokenesford, or Droxford. In 1296 an Abbot's precept[4] ordered payment of £15 to him; the purpose is not specified, and the other contents of the letter imply that it may have been for arrears due. Like Foxle, he was sent about on business to the manors; at one time, being then the King's falconer, he was at Laleham,[5] and an account-roll of the

[1] This was followed in Easter term, 1293, by a plea heard before the Justices in Eyre at the Stone Cross in which Richard de Aqua or atte Water, alleged that the Abbot, John de Foxle and Philip the Bailiff had unjustly disseisined him of his free tenement in the vill of Westminster of the custody of the Abbey Gate, and of a daily corrody of two loaves, a flagon and a half of strong beer, with two messes from the Convent kitchen, of hay and herbage, and of a yearly pension of six shillings. The dispute turned on the contention that the custody of the gate involved also the custody of the prisoners in the gaol, which the Abbot maintained and Richard denied. The case went against Richard who agreed to accept his corrody and to fulfil the two-fold task. Cf. Domesday, ff. 92, 92*b*, and *Year Book* 21 *and* 22 *Edw. I* (Rolls. Ser.) p. 576.

[2] "In expensis senescalli et aliorum superueniencium de Banco et Scaccario domini Regis," 5s. 11½d.

[3] Cf. Prof. T. F. Tout, *Edw. II*, pp. 335, n., 339, 342.

[4] *Mun.* 31338.

[5] *Mun.* 27113.

period, 5 December, 1302—30 September, 1303, shows that the Provost there paid him 2s. 4d. for his travelling charges and gave his horses 3 quarters 2 bushels of corn. His income from the Abbot was less than half that which was paid to Foxle, being £5 in all,[1] but he is one case, out of several, where the Abbot's servants were at the same time the King's also, and where ministers of the King's justice were in receipt of regular incomes from those upon whom they might sit in judgment. It was John of Droxford who, as keeper of the King's Wardrobe, had to take a public inventory of the jewellery and other valuables that survived from the pillage of the Treasury in 1303,[2] a crime for which the Abbot, in whose pay he was, found himself sent to the Tower with most of his monks. Droxford, it is only fair to add, was clearly an intimate friend of Wenlok. A compotus of the hospice, Michs., 1298—Michs., 1299,[3] shows a payment of 3s. to three minstrels at Eye "quando J. de Drokesford et J. Benstede[4] comederunt cum domino".

Below these in respect of the pay received by them, but rising men all the same, were a number of "clerici," mostly, no doubt, attached to the judicial side of the Court, but by no means averse from an addition to their state-pay in the shape of fees from the Abbot or the Convent or both. One of them, Dom. Gerard de Standen, was able to meet the Abbot's need of a loan to the extent of £20, and it was repaid to him out of the treasury, 31 October, 1295.[5] In earlier years he had been engaged on some considerable legal business for Abbot Wenlok at the Papal Court, as we gather from an account-roll of 1290[6] which records a payment of the same sum, £20, "domino Gerardo de Staundone procuratori Magistri Robert de Sancto Albano pro bulla

[1] *Mun.* 31455 = 15 October, 1306.

[2] See p. 150.

[3] *Mun.* 24502.

[4] John Benstead was Controller of the Wardrobe and Keeper of the Privy Seal. Tout, *Edw. II*, p. 77.

[5] *Mun.* 31291.

[6] *Mun.* 24493 (4).

per eundem in curia Romana perquisita"; Robert of St. Albans, clerk to Queen Alianore, was also in the Abbot's service at a fee of 22s. a term.[1]

The curious point is the number of these clerks whom the Abbot retained at the same time, continuing to do so for many years. Thus at St. Edward's Feast in 1289, Dan Richard de Pycheford, the Abbot's clerk, received his yearly pension of 40s.,[2] and on 6 February, 1296, he was given part payment for 1294-95[3]; Robert de Leyham and William de Birleye are two other clerks, to whom the Abbot gave 20s. in 1295 as part payment of the arrears of their fees.[4] We can see this repeated in 1298: William de Birleye was still in the service in 1306 and so was Robert de Bardeby.[5] The normal fee of such clerks was 20s. a term. John de Langeford or Longeford and Master Robert de Gravesend are examples of those clerks who were not merely retained for legal business as it arose, but were daily occupied in the management of property. To Longford 20s. stood for part payment of a year's salary,[6] his total being 10s. a quarter or term; and Gravesend received the same[7]; but probably both of them could add "and all found" to the conditions of their employment. Along with these we must reckon a number of men who were actually King's Justices, while the Abbot was paying them for services rendered to him. Roger de Hegham, William de Bereford, J. de Botesford, and Nicholas de Warwick were retained at 10s. a term; Roger de Suthcote, Richard de Gosfeld and Hamo de la Barre, at half a mark, and Edmund de Wrottinge at a quarter of a mark.[8] Here, again, the letters are by no means the only evidence available. We have no less than eighteen acquittances of Hamo de la Barre for fees paid to him between 1288 and 1306[9];

[1] *Mun.* 24493 (3).
[2] *Mun.* 31275.
[3] *Mun.* 31308.
[4] *Mun.* 31302; 31304.
[5] *Mun.* 31377, 31460, 31413. Cf. Tout, *Edw. II*, p. 323 f.
[6] *Mun.* 31321.
[7] *Mun.* 31472.
[8] *Mun.* 31323, 31457.
[9] *Mun.* 28828 ff.

and there were terms during which he was retained both by the Abbot for his part and by the Prior and Convent for theirs.[1] Evidently he must be ready to lend a hand in any manor that needed attention; for example, when Reginald de Hadham was superintending the manor of Knightsbridge in 1292-93, he entered the delivery of one quarter of butter to "Hamund atte Barre".[2]

Two other Justices in Wenlok's employment should be mentioned. In 1297-98 he ordered payment of two marks to William Ynge and Henry Spigurnel for services in connexion with a suit about Birlingham, near Pershore, and of one mark for the plea of one Nicholas Franceys.[3] In 1303, the year during which he was engaged in trying the case of the Burglary of the Royal Treasury,[4] Spigurnel was receiving from the Abbot his annual fee of 20s.,[5] and he continued to do so as long as Wenlok lived. Among the letters is the Abbot's precept[6] dated "apud Insulam" on the morrow of Ascension Day, Friday, 5 May, 1307, to pay 40s. to Dominus H. Spigurnel for his fee for two years. The order was promptly executed, for among our accquittances is the Justice's receipt for payment,[7] which runs as follows:—

Pateat vniuersis quod ego Henricus Spigurnel miles recepi de domino meo domino Waltero Abbate Westm. quadraginta solidos sterlingorum de annuo feodo meo duorum annorum in quibus idem dominus W. mihi tenebatur de quibus quidem xl. solidis me fateor esse pacatum et dictum dominum meum quietum per presentes.

As it bears date 6 May, 1307, he was clearly paid within twenty-four hours of the issue of the precept, and the language shows how completely he regarded himself as the Abbot's servant. Yet there was never any attempt in the

[1] *Mun.* 29038, 29041 = Easter, 1298.
[2] *Mun.* 16383.
[3] *Mun.* 31377.
[4] Cf. Palgrave, *Kal. and Inv. of the Exchequer*, pp. 270 f.
[5] Treasurers' Roll, 1303, *Mun.* 19839.
[6] *Mun.* 31482.
[7] *Mun.* 29235.

Abbey to belittle his status or his claim to respect as a King's Justice. Thus in 1298-99 the Provost of Feering manor in Essex entered in his compotus[1] a payment of ninepence for a messenger who was hired to go to "Cauntebrigge" and there await the arrival of Dominus H. Spigurnel,[2] the Justice, who was on the rota to take the assize in the county of Essex, for the purpose of ascertaining whether the assizes would travel by Waledene (Saffron Walden) or not.

And even these names do not exhaust the references to the legal employees of the Abbot. There is a family called Ludgershall, of whom several members served him from time to time. John de Luttegareshale, attorney, appears in 1285.[3] William de Ludgasshale gets his fee of 20s., 29 May, 1306,[4] and Dominus Walter de Lotegasshale the same sum for Easter term, 1307.[5] Then there were the brothers Robert and Adam de Phyleby, whom Wenlok employed from his first year (November, 1284) onwards as his agents at the Roman Court "pro arduis ecclesie sue Westmon' negociis expediendis".[6] Adam, who was Sub-Dean and Canon of Stafford Priory,[7] received his fee in the shape of a robe; on 12 March, 1287, the Abbot ordered[8] payment of £3 3s. 4d. to one Andrew de Stanford, pre-

[1] *Mun.* 25600.

[2] Tout, *Edw. II*, p. 374, dates his appointment as a Justice "? 1300"; our reference is to 1298-99, (Michs.-Michs.)

[3] Master John de Ludgershall was one of our Abbot's earliest retainers in legal matters. When Wenlok was borrowing money in Rome in May, 1284, for the expenses of his confirmation, the bond (*Mun.* 12879) was tested, among others, by Master Adam de Phyleby, Archdeacon of Salop, and by this Master John, who is described as "Rector ecclesie sancti Laurencii in Candelewicastrata Londoniensi". This church was afterwards called St. Laurence Pountney, and our Domesday chartulary (f. 488*b*.) gives us the name of an earlier rector, William Chenduit, *c.* 1230; in his time it was called St. Laurence on the Bank. Master John is also mentioned in a concord about land on the manor of Eye, being then the Abbot's attorney, 1285 (Domesday, f. 104).

[4] *Mun.* 31426. [5] *Mun.* 31477. [6] *Mun.* 9436.

[7] Domesday, f. 301 *a*, *b*. [8] *Mun.* 31273.

sumably a clothier, for Master Adam's "pellusa" for the preceding Christmas term, and on 24 April, 1307, there is a mandate for an issue of five marks to the executors of William de Filebi,[1] no doubt a member of the same family, in full solution of all arrears of his pension.

It may be concluded that all these lawyers were a regular part of the abbatial organisation, engaged in the normal conveyancing and the like that was inevitable for a holder of estates in many counties, and for a high ecclesiastic who must satisfy the manifold calls to put in a formal appearance before the Papal Curia. But from time to time there would be other expenses arising out of special cases. For example, Wenlok commanded[2] "Frere" Henry Payn (26 April, 1307) to hand 20s. to William Merre, who succeeded John de Foxle as chief Seneschal, in order to secure one Serjeant Compter in the plea between himself and the Templars; with which we may compare an entry in a compotus of 1306-7,[3] which covers the date in question and says: "in allocacione cuiusdam narratoris narrantis ex parte domini contra Templarios in Banco xx^{s}." But he did not always come off so lightly. The famous suit between him and the Franciscans about the apostate Friar William of Pershore, which spread itself over the years 1290-95,[4] involved Wenlok in heavy costs; and we may safely ascribe to this epoch an undated letter[5] to James Rossel and Roger de Piuuelesdone, two of his Worcestershire land-agents. In it he explains to them that he is in debt to the merchants for 800 marks for costs as between himself and the Friars Minors, and that the last day allowed for payment is the octave of St. Martin (18 Nov.); so to save him from dishonour and from condemnation in costs they must raise all that they possibly can on their respective properties, without, of course, incurring actual loss to him—rents, taxes, leases, and income of any other

[1] *Mun.* 31479. [2] *Mun.* 31480. [3] *Mun.* 24257.
[4] *Mun.* 6386-97; cf. *Monumenta Franciscana*, II, 31-62.
[5] *Mun.* 31501.

kind; he mentions in particular £3 4s. 6d. from Pershore and £4 19s. 7d. from Abbot's Morton and Longdon; and he ends by directing that all available live stock, beyond what is needed for his larder, should be fattened and sold for profit—five cows from Chaddesley; four oxen from Morton Foliot; six oxen, three cows and twenty-four pigs from Pershore; fourteen pigs from Todenham; and a cow and twenty-four pigs from Islip; as who should say, "quocunque modo rem".

But, apart from a numerous retinue and occasional lawsuits, the letters show—what we shall gather from other sources—that an Abbot of Westminster's hand was always in his pocket to pay for presents and compliments to all kinds of persons, great and small, whose influence must be conciliated or their help acknowledged. Some of these gifts might be called bribes, if they were not so openly presented and so candidly reckoned as part of a year's charges. The King's Bench included a posse of officials whom it was well to recognise: so we get an order to Henry Payn to give 2s. to each of five challengers ("clamatoribus"), namely, Bartholomew before the King, and four others "in Banco," and 12d. to their two boys, with a proviso that the whole outlay must be limited to 11s.[1]; and another, that half a quarter of wheat was to be handed as a Christmas gift to Walter, called Tapizon, the King's Crier at the Bench.[2] A much greater man, Dominus Roger le Brabazon, another Justice who was occupied in 1303 in investigating the Burglary of the Treasury, was given four quarters of oats at a cost of 13s. 4d. on Sunday, 7 May, 1307,[3] a week or so after the date at which the Abbot, as we have seen, had briefed his counsel in the suit against the Templars. On the other hand, it must be admitted that this Justice was on visiting terms with Wenlok; for example, we have an account of a journey to York in 1303,[4]

[1] *Mun.* 31416 = 3 May, 1306.

[2] *Mun.* 31547; no date; prob. 1293.

[3] *Mun.* 31483; the gift is entered in *Mun.* 24257.

[4] *Mun.* 9251.

where on a Thursday the Abbot is seen expending 6s. "in uno presento Domino R. Le Brabeson de caponibus et cuniculis," and recouping himself by dining with the recipient on the Friday, just as on the Friday he sends a salmon, price 5s., to another judge, already mentioned as in his service, "Dominus W. de Berefford," and is his guest at dinner on the Saturday. We may give a similarly charitable interpretation to the fact that "Dan Renald de Hadham" had orders[1] to deliver to the Abbot's chamber fourteen cheeses which he would send as compliments to the Justices in Eyre at "La Croyz de Pere".

To these we must add various servants at the Palace, as distinct from the Justiciary. A quarter of fine wheat goes to John, the King's Waferer[2]; a quarter of wheat and a quarter of oats to Mestre John, the King's Purveyor[3]; 8s.' worth of oats to John de Byconore, of the king's household[4]; 12s. to three of the King's Chamberlains, and a mark to Walter, the Clerk of the King's Chapel[5]; 2s. to Jacomini de Taberi, the Queen's Chamberlain, and half a mark to William Rood, of the King's Chamber[6]—gifts such as these naturally coincided with the Abbot's sojourns at the Abbey or La Neyte, when it was a matter of consequence to him to have ready access to the greater folk on whom these persons were in attendance.

And, of course, the greater folk themselves were not neglected. In Wenlok's last year there arrived a Cardinal, who was a cause of much outlay, both complimentary and obligatory—apparently Peter, Bishop of Sabine.[7] An account roll of the Abbot's Hospice[8] contains an item of £5, "in expensis domini euntis contra Cardinalem in primo aduentu dicti Cardinalis in Angliam". But the

[1] *Mun.* 31582; no date: prob. 1293.
[2] *Mun.* 31353. [3] *Mun.* 31389.
[4] *Mun.* 31426 = Trinity Sunday, 1306.
[5] *Mun.* 31427 = 3 June, 1306.
[6] *Mun.* 31435 = 11 July, 1306.
[7] Called "the Spanish Cardinal," see Rymer, *Foed.* II, 1035, 1057.
[8] *Mun.* 24257 = 1306-7.

letters bring us nearer to the exact date. One of 24 April, 1307,[1] contains Wenlok's precept for the payment of £8 12s. for the Cardinal's procurations and another for a present of £3 6s. 6d. to the Cardinal and the Friars Preachers; the Abbot was then at "the Isle," Westminster, and, except that he was at Paddington on the Sunday after Ascension Day (7 May),[2] he stayed at Westminster till nearly the end of July, when he was free to get away for a few days to his beloved Denham[3]; but he was back at La Neyte again in August and September, from which it may be gathered that important affairs detained him. Anyhow it was worth while to have his Eminence's retinue in good humour, and the gifts commanded in *Mun.* 31488 (25 June, 1307)—to Albertinus de Florencia, 20s.; to the Cardinal's Chamberlain, 20s.; to the Auditor of Causes, 20s.; to Alfonse, 10s.; to three esquires, 20s.—may be ascribed to this cause. But equally there must be some personal gift to his Eminence himself, and the compotus[4] of the Hospice, from which we have already quoted, shows that the gift must be on the grand scale: "in vna cuppa cum duobus picheris emptis et missis Cardinali xiiij. li. iijd."

But Edward I was nearing the end of his long reign, and the Cardinal was evidently in close association with "the Prince"; in any case the favour of the heir-apparent was a matter of moment to the Abbot of Westminster. In May, 1307, Wenlok and Prince Edward had a private bargain in horse-dealing, for Henry Payn received a missive[5] bidding him deliver to Ingelhard, the Prince's clerk, the sum of £6 13s. 4d. for a horse bought for the Abbot's use. It was a large price to pay, though Wenlok sometimes paid much more, and the animal may have been of great value, but also the Abbot may have thought it wise to pay more than the horse was really worth. The last letter[6]

[1] *Mun.* 31479.
[2] *Mun.* 31483.
[3] *Mun.* 31494, *c.* 25 July, 1307.
[4] *Mun.* 24257.
[5] *Mun.* 31485.
[6] *Mun.* 31490; cf. 24257.

sent out by Wenlok in Edward I's reign (though his letters of 25 July were still being ascribed to 35 Edw. I) was written on 6 July, 1307; it ordered Henry Payn to disburse 40s. for a new carriage which Wenlok had bought as a present for the Prince; on the following day, in the far north, Edward I passed away at Burgh-on-Sands in Cumberland. The compotus of the Hospice differs from the letters in not giving the day or the month of payments made during the year under review; but we may safely ascribe to this period—June or July, 1307—the joint benevolence of the Abbot to the Prince and the Cardinal which is thus recorded: "in iiij bobus et xij multonibus emptis de Johanne Elyot de Stanes pro exennio Principis et Cardinalis iiij li. x.s. viijd.".[1] There was a party among the monks, as we shall see, who regarded all this with some suspicion; they liked it as little as they would like an order[2] to Merre, the Seneschal, in November, 1306, to hand the sum of £6 13s. 4d. to Dominus Petrus de Causton—if, as is probable, we are to identify the recipient with Piers Gaveston. For this man was the rising power of the moment, and rose further when the old King was dead. The mortal remains of Edward I must be respected, and the Seneschal enters in his account a payment made "eo die quo dominus arripuit iter contra corpus Regis".[3] But now there were new men to deal with. Wenlok's touch with the old King had been close; the endowment of the Queen Alianore charities at the Abbey is proof of that; we may, perhaps, see traces of their last meeting in a statement of the Provost of Eye Manor that in 1304-5 he furnished a corn allowance to "ij caretariis existentibus cum domino Abbate uersus Regem apud Lyncolne per iii septimanas".[4] At Edward I's last Parliament at Carlisle, in the beginning of 1307, Wenlok, as we shall have reason to see, had his agent in the person of Brother William de Chalk, who took two journeys thither that winter at the

[1] *Mun.* 24257. [2] *Mun.* 31464. [3] *Mun.* 24257.
[4] *Mun.* 26870. Probably in Dec., 1304; cf. Rymer, II. 955.

Abbot's charges, the one costing £6 13s. 4d. and the other £8 13s. 4d.,[1] and there was no need for a monk to disburse anything like that sum on his travelling and personal maintenance. Now that the old King was gone, the Abbot might hope to find the centre of State affairs nearer to Westminster. It was a vain hope, but it would last for the six months of life that were left to him.

But it may still be felt that, after mention has been made of various servants of high degree, there remains a certain doubt as to the kind of establishment which our Abbot was expected to maintain. Admittedly his expenses were heavy and his "courtesies" were distributed on a fairly lavish scale; but what had he to show in the way of retinue? Sometimes we can get our answer from some legal bargain which deals with the Abbot's right to be entertained at a particular manor or place, and which was on that account copied into Domesday. Such a case arose in Richard de Berking's time in connexion with the manor of Hendon, Middlesex, both Hendon and Hampstead being favourite resorts of our monks when in need of a change of air.[2] Three carucates of land were granted to Gilbert de Hendone[3] by Abbot Berking and the Convent on terms which incidentally give us some of the information that we want. Once in each year the grantee must provide a lodging for the Abbot on a day to be chosen by the Abbot, who shall give a fortnight's notice by letter of his intended arrival. On the eve of the specified day his lordship's cook and his Seneschal will arrive to make preparation and will be entertained at Gilbert's charges. On the day itself the Abbot's seven chief servants will present themselves, and to them will be committed the seven offices of the house; to wit: to his seneschal the hall; to his chamberlain the chamber; to his pantryman the charge of the provisions and the bread; to his butler the custody

[1] *Mun.* 31473, 31479.
[2] Cf. *Monks of Westminster*, pp. 22, *n.*, 63, 67, 79.
[3] Domesday, f. 121*b*, 122.

of the wine and other drink; to his ostiary the charge of the door; to his cook the kitchen; and to his marshal the stable. The Abbot is limited to thirty-five horses, but up to that limit the grantee must entertain the entire party for one day, and until after breakfast the next morning, and the provision must include candles, namely, two tapers to burn before the Abbot, one pound of wax in each, and one candle, ten thumbs long, for each of the thirty-five horses, the "waste" being a perquisite of the Abbot's chamberlain. Each of the seven chief servants must be given 1s. on departure.

We may assume, then, that Walter de Wenlok's retinue was not less than that of Richard de Berking had been sixty years before. But it happens that Wenlok has left a full description both of his establishment and of his method of maintaining it. The document is in Norman-French, and is in a very faded condition;[1] but I have made a transcript of it as well as I could, and the undimmed eye of Dr. Edward Scott went over it for me a few months before his sudden death. It bears no date, but there is no doubt as to its being Wenlok's; no other Abbot of Westminster of the era to which such writing might belong could begin: "Wauter par la grace deu Abbe de Westm.". It is necessary, he says, that everyone who keeps up an establishment should follow a certain system for the protection of his house and his reputation. Therefore let the system here set forth be observed in all points. First, we must have certain Receivers to whom come from the bailiffs and provosts the monies derived from our lands, tallies being kept by them for all such receipts; no livery to be made by them or from the estates, unless the Receivers keep a tally of it, and unless there is our letter patent to warrant it. The Receivers are to deliver to the Wardens of our hostel the sums of money needed to make provision for it, keeping tallies of each sum so delivered. Reckoning is to be made each night of

[1] *Mun.* 24504. (For the text see pp. 106-112.)

the disbursements for the hostel in front of the officials and of the Seneschal, who shall have control of all expenditure whether for the chamber or the hostel. If the Seneschal is away by our leave or direction, then the account of the hostel shall be sealed till his return, the expenditure in the meantime being recorded by each officer separately, till it can be entered in the main account, which is to be sealed each night with the Seneschal's own seal. Besides the Seneschal of the hostel, there is the Seneschal of our lands, and the two together make provision for our journeys through the manors and estates as they think best for our honour and profit. The Seneschal of the estates is our vice-gerent, and the provosts and bailiffs must carry out his instructions. He may come to the hostel with three horses, his clerk, and three pages, and must receive honour next after ourselves. To him the Seneschal of the hostel must produce the accounts, and show the state of the provisions, the stock, and the treasure, and consult with him as to any matters that await his coming before they can be put right.

The Seneschal of the hostel is in full authority in the hostel itself, and the staff must show him obedience. All the things in the various offices are to be entered in duplicate lists under his supervision. The officers are to bring in their accounts each evening, and in the presence of them all he is to make strict inquiry into any misdoings; for the first and the second petty offence they may be reproved and punished; for the third the Seneschal must dismiss them; for any great offence he must dismiss them at once, and the consequent loss to us must be made up. Those who are thus dismissed must not come back in hope of being forgiven. The bailiffs and provosts are to deliver to the Seneschal of the hostel what he orders by letter in the way of wheat, barley, hay, timber, and coal, at the prices current in the district, and whatever stock there is in the estates which is not wanted for the maintenance of the estates can also be delivered to him at current prices.

When we are resident on any of the estates, we wish that nothing should be taken except at a set price.

Our Marshal must be of good address, courteous, and prudent, and he must observe and report each night how many covers have been laid at table and how many liveries given out. He must see that important guests have their right precedence at the board, that the musicians and the messengers are placed by themselves and served according to their condition, that the pages are drilled to come all together to the door of the hall when we ourselves are seated, and that pages not of our House are seated and honourably served according to their estate. When they rise after the meal, let them not linger between the hall and the entrance nor gather in the offices, but go to their horses without rousing the neighbourhood. The Marshal must be up betimes in the morning and see that there is no mischief afoot among these pages, our own or others; then he must go to the stable and make sure that the palfreys and other horses are comfortably littered, and that the stalls and mangers are so arranged that there is no waste of hay or provender through carelessness. He ought to be the earliest to rise and the last to go to bed; for he is, as it were, the husband of the hostel. He must not indulge in sport, whether with dogs or birds, for it is his duty to be always ready, and unless he has special leave of the Seneschal, he must never go away out of earshot. No dinners or suppers must be laid in the offices; those who want either must take them at the table in the hall. There is enough for everybody, but there must be no wastefulness. He must prevent any gathering of single women and pages and others about the place, for the avoiding of quarrels and other troubles. Fires are to be lit in the hall on the vigil of All Saints and to be discontinued on Easter Eve. The delivery of candles is settled by the Seneschal and the Marshal. He (it is not clear whether this is the Seneschal or the Marshal) must be careful to have our hall neatly arranged, the cushions,

laver, basin, and other furnishings all in their proper place.

The esquire who acts as butler is to have charge both of the pantry and the wine-cellar; he must see that the wheat of which his lord's bread is made is clean and pure; and he must make special bread out of two bushels of wheat, finer and whiter than that used in ordinary baking. The Abbot, his clerks, and his provosts are to have only good and unmixed beer. The butler must also account to the Seneschal of the hospice for all the napery and cloths and other plenishings of the pantry, and also for the clamped and smaller barrels and the baskets of the buttery. Account is to be taken each night of the wheat supplied to him, according to current prices. Brewing equally comes under his care. The keys of the pantry and the buttery should not be carried out of doors, and no livery should be made except at the order or desire of the Seneschal or Marshal. The butler can only absent himself by the Seneschal's leave, and if his underlings are helping him he is still responsible for the keys.

The master-cook is the chief warden of the larder, and must be careful that there is no wastefulness either in the larder or in the kitchen; he must be clean, and allow no one to approach the Abbot's own special dish, nor to come into the kitchen, unless on his proper business. He again must give account of all liveries and purchases in his department to the Seneschal of the hospice. Those who serve my lord with dishes must be sober and clean in all respects. The cook is in particular a body-servant of the Abbot; he must never be absent without leave, and must know his lord's future movements.

The porter must be a man of sound morals and of good address towards everybody, and must never dare to leave the court of the place where his lord is residing. He should keep an eye on all delivery of goods coming his way; if he notes anything that is open to suspicion, he must inform the Marshal or the Seneschal, that it may be

stopped; he must not allow other porters to pass till he has examined their load, and should retain them till he has spoken to the Marshal. He must restrain boys and bad characters and women, lest any harm happen unawares. If a stranger comes of doubtful appearance or not known by sight, he must be halted at the gate till his identity is ascertained and word sent courteously to the Seneschal or the Marshal. The washerwoman must also stay at the gate and there receive the linen and there deliver it again to the servants of the establishment. At bed-time the porter should go round the whole court and see that no one remains within except the trusted retainers.

The larderer should know how to keep his department well-stocked with venison and flesh-meat, and should do his work under the advice and direction of the master-cook. After the latter he is the chief man in the kitchen, and he must show himself humble and well-behaved and obedient to his superior.

No one in the establishment must keep dogs or birds, and if any one brings either dog or bird and stays three days, then the animal shall be the Abbot's property, to dispose of as he pleases. No valet is to have horse or farm-horse or equipage, save him to whom the lord himself gives permission; and if any one has a horse or a page, the Marshal is to get rid of the page from the courtyard. The Marshal should have the Abbot's esquires all ready each morning, robed alike as far as possible, especially when his lordship goes to Parliament or other assemblies, or when other great lords arrive.

This is the retinue which the Abbot requires. At the head of it are his two chaplains, to whom are due the chief honours after his own. There follows a list of the robes which are to be given to this suite by way of wages. Only, Wenlok places first his mother and sister, who are each to have a robe with its proper hood. The *maître des logis* is to have two robes with hoods, two horses and two pages, taking hay for the horses and half a bushel of corn

nightly, when they are resting, and a bushel when at work. Master Renald of St. Albans has a robe complete. A physician is to fare like the *maître des logis* if he is resident; if not, then a full livery, when he pays visits. The Seneschal of the hospice fares like the *maître des logis* and receives besides forty shillings a year. The Seneschal of the western parts (*del Westpais*), two coloured robes with fur, and two horses. The Seneschal's servant two coloured robes, and the same to Thomas Romain,[1] and one coloured robe to Master Adam de Karewell. Others similarly recompensed include two scholars, the manor clerk, the Seneschal's clerk, and the clerk of the Chamber. The bailiff of Islip has two robes with fur, the bailiffs of Pershore and Staines, two robes; the bailiff of Westminster adds to his two robes a horse, so do the chief butler and the master-cook. There follow a number of domestics who receive a robe and a payment in cash: the chamberlain 4s., the larderer half a mark, the assistant butler and baker 4s. each, the brewer half a mark, the coachman 4s., the palfreyman and the chaplain's page 2s. each. The cheapest servants are the warrener of Wyke, the "parker" of Pershore, the "wodeward of Islip," and John Churchwyne, whose stipend is one robe; the most highly paid was the Seneschal set over all his lord's territorial goods, whose wage was two robes of "raye" with suitable furs, and four ells of coloured cloth at Christmas and Pentecost respectively, and the privilege already noted of coming with three horses. According to the list here given the abbatial establishment numbered forty-three persons, all told, and their wages meant sixty-five robes yearly besides various additional perquisites in most cases. It would be interesting to know if any Abbot of Wenlok's time or of any other has left us so complete a record of "the sitting of his servants, and the attendance of his ministers, and their apparel".

[1] The Jew who financed Wenlok, cf. p. 120.

Page 87. *Mun.* 4530.

Edwardus dei gracia Rex Anglie . . . omnibus ad quos presentes littere peruenerint salutem. Sciatis quod de gracia nostra speciali concessimus et licenciam dedimus pro nobis et heredibus nostris quantum in nobis est dilecto et fideli nostro Johanni de Foxle et Constancie vxori eius quod ipsi quandam placeam terre prati pasture et spineti de solo suo proprio in quodam loco qui vocatur Pokemere in Bray que est infra metas foreste nostre de Wyndesore includere et parcum inde facere et placeam illam sic inclusam et parcum inde factum tenere possint eisdem Johanni et Constancie et heredibus ipsius Johannis in perpetuum sine occasione vel impedimento nostri vel heredum nostrorum justiciariorum custodum foreste forestariorum viridariorum regardatorum et aliorum ministrorum nostrorum foreste quorumcunque. In cuius rei testimonium has litteras nostras fieri fecimus patentes. Teste me ipso apud Westm. vicesimo primo die februarii. Anno regni nostri quartodecimo

per breve de privato sigillo. Wath.[1]

(21 Feb., 1321.)

Page 87. *Mun.* 15689.

Pateat vniuersis quod cum inter Religiosos viros et dominos meos Abbatem et Conuentum Westmon. actores ex parte vna et me Johannem de Deneby Rectorem ecclesie de Langetone lincolniensis diocesis reum ex altera super quadam pensione annua duarum marcarum a prefata mea ecclesia de Langetone et me ipsius ecclesie Rectore materia coram domino Precentore sancti Saluatoris Bermundese priuilegiorum ecclesie Westmon. a sede apostolica indultorum conseruatore mota fuisset quomodo auctoritate apostolica Tandem ego Johannes de Deneby predictus volens vicium ingratitudinis prorsus euitare post multa et varia hinc et inde proposita inspectis quibusdam litteris autenticis de prefata pensione fidem facientibus ipsam pensionem duarum marcarum ius esse ecclesie Westmon. cognoui in judicio constitutus et dictis dominis meis fore debitam ab antiquo et in possessione eiusdem fuisse a tempore cuius memoria non existit et eam meis manibus solui possessionem continuando antiquam. Promittens me velle eam soluere absque

[1] Michael Wath, afterwards Master of the Rolls.

contradiccione qualibet temporibus successiuis. In cuius &c. Datum apud Bermundese in crastino sancti Jacobi apostoli Anno gracie MCCXCV° (26 July, 1295).

[NOTE.—It is likely that Foxle had been engaged on this affair of Launton, Co. Oxon., which is referred to in Domesday, ff. 275, 276*b*.]

Pages 99-104. *Mun.* 24504.

Wauter par la grace deu Abbe de Westm. a tuz ses leals saluz. Pur co qe necessarie est a checun home qe doit hostel tenir qe il eit certein ordre pur la garde de son hostel et son honur meintenir voloms et ordinoms qe le ordre de suz scrit soit en poinz en nostre hostel meintenu. Primes qe nus eoms certeins receuours de nos deners en gros des baylifs et des prouoz de totes nos terres. Et que cels facent tayles uers les baylifes et uers les prouoz de checune recette par soy. Issi qe ren ne soit liuere en chef fors a els et qe nule tayle de liueree sur aconte des maners desoremes soit alowee fors qe les tayles des auant diz receuours. E qe cels receuours ne facent nul liueree fors par nostre lettre patente. E qe les gardeins de nostre hostel prengent de cels receuours en grosses sommes deners pur fere les purueances de nostre hostel selom co qe il veront qe plus soit a nostre profit. E qe les chef receuours prengent de checune liueree qe il front as gardeins de nostre hostel tayle qe il vnt tant receu pur les despens de hostel. et qe il pusent par cele tayle estre sur lor aconte resonablement chargez. E qe les despens de hostel soieut acontez deuant les gens de offices checune nuit en la presence le senescal del hostel. le quel auera contre roule de totes les despens ausi ben de chambre com del hostel. E sil auenge qe le senescal del hostel soit nule part hors par nostre conge ou par nostre comandement qe le roule del hostel soit clos de suz son sel dokes a son reuenir. denz quel tens seront entrez les despens del hostel deuant les genns de ofices en son roule par soy. E a reuenir le senescal, soient cels despens examinez, et entrez en le Roule principal. assi qe ren ne soit entre en le Roule principal fors en la presence lauandit senescal quel roule soit ensele checune nuit apres la conte du sel le senescal. Estre voloms et ordinoms qe par le conseil de nos senescals des terres e de nostre hostel soient les purueances fetes et les acrez ou les maners ou nus bioms a soriorner. solom co qe

il verront qe plus soit a nostre honur et a nostre profit. Estre co voloms qe nostre senescal de teres face pleinement son ofice de hors sicom apent. et qe il eit aprees nus meismes les comandemenz parmi nos maners et qe tuz les baylifs et prouoz soient a ly entendanz. et qe ses lettres et ses comandemenz soient receus et performez solom son comandement en totes les choses qe tuchent nostre honur et nostre prou. E kant il vendra a nostre hostel qe il soit receu a trois cheuals ed son clerke e trois garcons par sa demore e qe il soit honore principalment apres nus. E qe le senescal del hostel le apele as acontes e ly mustre lestat de lur purueances e de lor estor e de lor tresor denzeyn, issi qe parmi lor commun conseil soit ordine des purueances fere necessare, e qe si ren soit a amender endroit de la meisnee qe ne poett auant sa venue estre adresce, qe deuant ly soit adresce solom co qe il verront qe mester soit pur nostre honur e pur le ordre de hostel meintenir. Apres voloms qe le senescal de nostre hostel eit les comandemenz pleinement dedenz nostre hostel en totes le choses qe pusent a nostre profit et nostre honor torner. et qe la meisnee tute soit entendante a ly sicom apent. e qe les ofices soient gardez et menez par son ordeinement e qe totes les choses qe sont as ofices soient entrez en biles endentees par la veuwe le senescal, issi qe par cetes biles soient responsables qil oure (?) qe il soient aresonez. E qe totes les genz de ofices vengent as acontes checune nuit, et qe il en presence de tuz enquerge estreitement de tuz trespas. e illokes soient amendez en ceste manere. Primes qe il soient repris e chastiez por deuz fez de petiz trespas. e ala terce fez sil est cupable trouez qe il soit par le senescal congee. et si co soit grant trespas dont nul dels soit ateint soit congee par le senescal a primur. e mette le senescal peine qe cels trespas soient a nus amendez issi qe nus ne seoms perdanz. E ben defendoms qe cels qe serront par les encheisons auantdiz par le senescal congeez qe il ne reuengent pas a nus pur estre reconcilez. E qe bailifs e prouoz facent venir par le bref le senescal de nostre hostel co qe il lur mandere pur la purueance e la sustenance del hostel co de ble bros auayne bouche e charbon e qe ble bros e auaine soit mis en certein pris solom la vente del Pais. E qe si autre estor soit es maners, qe pust et doit estre vendu sauns la sustenance des maners soit a la sustenance del hostel liuere par le bref lauandit senescal e par certein pris sicom auant. Estre co voloms qe kant

nus soriornoms en akun de nos maners qe ren ne soit pris fors par certein pris. A co voloms nus qe nostre marescal soit de bel apel e de curtois e de bon auisement e qe il voie sache respondre e checune nuit com ben de mes sont despenduz en sale e en liuereez fetes. E qe les liuerees soient fetes par sa testmoinance e qe checun home de state soit assis a son droit a la table. e menestrels e messagers par els bas e serui solom lur estat et genz de mester de hostel par els e qe les garcons soient ordinez qe il vengent a une fez al vs de la sale qant nus meysmes serrons assis e qe il entrent a une fez e soient tost seruiz ca leuent a doner de formage. e qe garcons estranges soient assis par els e honorablement seruiz solom lur estat. E apres manger qant serront leuez qe il ne demorgent pas entre le vs de la salle ne es ofices ne vengent, mes aylent a lur chevals sanz fere noyse au peesse. E qe le marescal leue matin e face son torn de ofice en autre e voie sil ad ren reprendre com de pages ou dautres estrangers qe venent souen [t . . . n] coment il pusent mal fere devant que la meisnee soit leuee. Puys ayle a la marescalcie e voie coment les palefrois e autres cheuals soient eysez de litere e dautre eysemenz qe apendent as cheuals e co ne face pas solo[m. . . .]palefrois mes de tuz les cheuals del hostel. e voie qe maugneres e creates soient si atirez qe prouendre e foyn ne perise ne se gaste par petite laschesse. E qe il auise qant mester serra de ferrer les cheuals. qe garcons ne facent gast en ferure autre qe mester ne [soit?] e qe les cheuals des clercs e des esquiers soyent establiz par ordre non pas a volonte. A co voloms qe il soit le premer del hostel leue et le darrein couche qar il doit estre com hosebonde de hostel e au soyr voie les cheuals com a matin, coment il sont eysez. e qe il suruoie la liueree de feyn e dauaine e qe il en puse la nuit respondre sur laconte. Estre co voloms e comandoms qe il ne soie pas vilocers. e qe il ne se entremette de chens ne de oysels qar il doit tuz jors estre prest, e issi ne poent cels qe de deduit sentremettent. E qe il nayle plus loins hors del hostel qe il ne puet estre huche de bouche sil neit especial conge du senescal, e sil vet qe il reuenge en haste. Dautre part voloms e comandoms qe disners e sopers os ofices soient par ly deffendus, mes ky disner ou soper vodra face couerir table en sale e la se facent a eyse. E apres nostre issue de sale apres manger a souper qant les plus granz mestres cum clers e senescals serront issuz qe il comande clore

les vs des ofices, mes qe tuz ayent assez sanz gast fere. E qe il enqerge entre le leu ou nus demoroms qe mal acret (?) ny eit de soles femmes ne de pages, ne dautres qe ne pusent estre ben auowe e par akun qe power eit de tels auowe. e sil troue tels qe il les remuwe en haste, qar par tels est conseil de hostel e autre priuite souent descorde e autre mauueisce fet. Estre co voloms qe la veile de tuz seinz entre feu primes en sale e la veile de pasche soit oste. De liueree de chandels soit a la discrecion le senescal e le marescal. Kar akune fez nus auendra ausi ben a veiler de chandele en este com en yuer, e donc ne porront pas les ofices estre sanz lumere, ne les autres sanz lumere coucher qe aueke nus aueront veile. A co voloms qe il voie qe la sale soit nettement atiree, bankers ben gardez, laueur e bacyn e autres choses qe a sale apendent. A co voloms qe nostre botiler del estat de esquiers soit mestre ausi ben de paneterie com de botilerie, e qe il voie qe le ble dont nostre payn serra fet soit bon e net e pur. e qe il face fere com de checune fornis payn de deus bussels qe soit plus tric e plus blank qe lautre commun payn. E ausi de ceruoise voie qe il ne donne a nus ne a nul de nos clers ne de nos prouoz ceruoise autre qe bone ne medlee en nule manere. E qe il sache respondre au senescal del hostel de napes tuyales sannenapes e dautres menues choses de paneterie. de barils ferrez, menues barils de hanaps et dautres menues choses de botelerie qant il le endreit aresoner. e co auera il par bile contre le senescal sicom auant est espresce. E qe il respoine a la conte checune nuit de ble fornie e com ben e quel respons le ble fet selom le prys qe est en nostre hostel vse. E qe il suruoye souent les fez le pestur au molin e a pestrin. Ausi voloms qe il face endrett del bracur de qant qe le touche. E qant il nus couendra ceruoise achater, qe il meismes face le akat et response a la conte. Estre co voloms qe la clef de paneterie ne de botelerie ne soit loins hors portes, mes qele soit preste al honur le seygnor. e qe nule liueree ne face le panetier ne cels qe sont desuz ly es ofices fors par comandement e veuwe de senescal ou de marescal. E qe il ne se aloigne nule part hors del hostel sil neit especial conge le senescal. e qe les clefs des dous ofices soient en sa garde checune nuit e de jor fors qant il couent qe ses vadlez facent lur ofices desud ly. Estre co voloms qe nostre mestre keu soit chef gardein de nostre larder, e qe il soit si auise, qe guast ne soit fett en nules

choses qe larder touchent, ne cusine. e qe il soit net e qe nul ne aproche nostre viande e sil nest especialment nostre jure e qe il ne seoffre qe nul ne soit en la cusine fors cels qe sont pur la cusine assignez. et qe il respoyne de la vessele par bile qe liueree ly sera par le senescal del hostel. e qe il soit as achaz fere de tutes choses qe touchent son ofice. e qe il naile nule part hors fors as choses nescesaries fere sanz conge. Estre co voloms nus qe celi qe doit trencher deuant nus soit coy sobres e net sur totes choses. e qe il entende especialment a nostre cors e qe il nus queyte e saye quel part qe nus irroms sil neit especial conge de nus meismes. Cesti e nostre chamberleyn retenoms nus uers nus meismes a nos comandemenz qe a autre ne soient entandanz e qant qe a nostre chambre e chapele apent issi qe nul fors nus e nos chapeleins sentremette. A co voloms nus qe nostre porter soit sobres chastez e de bel respons a tuz, e qeil ne soit si hardie qe il ayle hors de la curt ou nus demorroms. E qe il auise les liuerees qe venent deuers la sale, qant eles vendront par son ofice, e sil voit chose suspeciouse qe il fett la liuere le marescal ou del senescal qe il la face arester e autres porters ne seoffre nul passer, qe il ne cerchent co qe il portent e arestee dokes il eit parle oue le marescal, e qe il ne seoffre nule vessele estre porte hors de la porte e qe . . . de garcons de ribaux e de femmes issi qe nul y soit qe damage puse fere ne par ky nostre conseil pust estre descouert. E si estrange venge a la porte qe ne soit de aparence e qe connuz ne soit, qe il soit tenuz a la porte dokes hom sache a ky il est, et qe hom auera fet son message au senescal ou a marescal en curtoise manere. E qe la lauendere demorge a la porte e illokes receiue les draz qe sont a lauer. e illokes autres fez les reliure as officers e as garcons des clers e a dautres de la meisnee. Estre co a oure de coucher visite le porter tote la curt e voie qe nul ne demorge dedenz fors noz jurez. e voloms e comamdoms qe par nus ne par autre ne soit nule part mande de la porte. e qe le porter sache ben ferrer e le ofice de ferrure face par matin qant mester serra ou apres manger qant la sale serra veudee assi qe lun office ne se deface pur lautre. A co voloms nus qe nostre lardener sache ben apariler vn larder aus ben de veneson com de grosse char e par le conseil e lauisement le mestre keu face son ofice. e qil sache responder des qerers (?), e des issues. e qe il en absence del mestre keu soit principal en la cusine. e qe il soit humbles e deboneres e de bel respons a

son mestre keu e a ly responant de qant qe son ofice touche. Apres voloms qe nul de nostre hostel ait chen ne oysel e si nul y ameigne chen ou oysel e demorge trois jors, qe il soit a nostre volente de doner e fere co qe nus plerra. Estre co voloms qe nul des vadlez de mester eit cheual ne cheual des maners ne cheuauche fors cely a ki nus donoms le conge meismes. e si nul eit cheual ou page, le marescal deliure nostre curt del page e face nostre prou del cheual, apres vn amonestement del remuwer. Estre co voloms qe nostre marescal face garnir nos esquiers par matin et qe il prengent robes de une suyte plus qe il poent e nomeement qant nus conuendra deuanz parlemenz ou assemblees ou autres grans seignors aparer. Cest la meisnez queles nus voloms ouer. Primes nos deus chapeleins quels nus voloms qe soient honorez principalement apres nus. *Apres a Robes.* Nostre mere vne Robe oue la pelure qe apent. Nostre suer une Robe oue la pelure. e Vn logistr' a deus Robes enteres oue les pelures e deus cheuals deus garcons e prenge pur les deus cheuals feyn e checune nuit en soiorn di. bz dauaine e au trauail vn bz. Mestre Renald de Seint Alban une Robe entere. Vn mestre de ffisike a meismes les condicions com le logistre sil est del tut demorant e si nonn prenge pleine liueree a ses venues. Vn senescal de nostre hostel clerk a meismes les condicions com de logistre e prenge par an qarante souz. Le senescal del Westpais a ii robes de color oue les ferures daygnel e od deus cheuals. Jake de senescal ii robes de color. Thomas Romein ii robes de color. Mestre Adam de Karewell i robe de color. Deus escolers neuons ii robes. Williame Fitz Huges (?) ii robes. clerk des maners vne robe. Clerk le senescal vne robe. Bailif de Istelep ii robes oue les ferures. Clerk de Chambre i robe de color. *Apres esquiers.* Le senescal de terres ii robes de Raye oue les ferures couenables e en contre de Noel iiii augnes de drap de color e en contre le Pentecuste iiii augnes de drap de color e soit receu a iii cheuals a ses venues. Richard Vaus dous robes ii cheuals. Williame de Wenloc ii robes. Williame del Ewe ii robes i cheual. Vn vadlet pur nostre cors ii robes i cheual. Vn chef botiler ii robes i cheual. Vn mestre keu ii robes i cheual. Vn marescal ii robes i cheual. J. Ferar i robe. Bailif de Persore ii robes. Baylif de Stanes ii robes. Baylif de Westm. ii robes i cheual. *Vadlez de semesters.* Vn chamberlein i robe e iiii^{s}. Vn lardiner i robe e demi marc. Vn sutbotiler i

robe iiii^{s}. Vn sutpanetier vne robe iiii^{s}. Vn porter vne robe e iiii^{s}. Vn pestur e bracur vne robe e demi marc. Le chareter i robe iiii^{s}. Le parker de Persore i robe. Le Wodeward de Istelep i robe. Le Warener de Wyke i robe. Johan Chirchwine i robe. Thomas le Jeofne i Robe. Le Barbur i Warnement. *Les Garcons.* Vn palefraur i robe ii^{s}. vn garcon pur le chapelein i robe ii^{s}. i garcon [pur les] paniers i robe iii^{s}. Deus garcons pur la charette checun dels i robe e ii^{s}.

Note.

In his *Chapters in the Administrative History of Mediæval England,* which has come to hand as this book was going to press, Professor Tout has printed in full (Vol. II, pp. 158-163) the "Ordenances del Hostel le Roy," issued by Edward I in 1279. Walter de Wenlok may well have compiled his "ordenances" five years later. In any case the similarities of language and intention are worth noting.

CHAPTER VII.

EXPENSES AND DEBTS.

VARIOUS quotations already made from the Abbot's daily correspondence have been concerned with payments that were in arrear. A farrier at a manor or a Justice at the Bench might equally have to wait two, three, and even more years for the payment of what seems to us a small sum. And it is beyond question that this lord of broad acres was often but ill supplied with ready cash. On 25 July, 1307, being then for a few days at Denham, the Abbot sent a messenger to town to Henry Payn, his Seneschal, demanding 8s.; for the farrier, said he, asserts that a sum of 14s. is due to him; but let the bearer bring back 8s. for this purpose, and no more, for lack of money.[1] And it was probably difficult for him at any time to judge exactly how he stood financially, in spite of, and perhaps because of, the many hard-working officials by whom he was surrounded. The excellent Henry Payn, for instance, presented the Abbot at Michaelmas, 1306, with a balance sheet for the period that had elapsed since 13 December, 1305.[2] It showed that his income during that time was £411 2s. 1¾d., made up of arrears of rents, £93 5s. 8¼d.; manor rents due and paid, £143 3s. 6½d.[3]; and cash payments of various kinds, £174 12s. 11d. As off-sets against this revenue, Payn shows general expenditure on the manors and otherwise, £138 15s. 7¼d.; various alms and benevolence, £25 1s. 8d.; fees and dues, £15 14s.; and gifts, £60 10s. 8d.; or £240 1s. 11¼d. in all. This left

[1] *Mun.* 31493. [2] *Mun.* 24256.
[3] In 1288-89 (*Mun.* 24252) the figure was £148 3s. 2¼d.

the hospice with a balance to the good consisting of £171 0s. 2½d. But we should be quite wrong in assuming from this that Walter de Wenlok was normally solvent.

However, though Wenlok often found himself poor amid his riches, there is reason to believe that as regards his main establishment he managed to bring about a more satisfactory state of affairs. I have instanced a balance-sheet of 1305-06. Let us take one of some eighteen years earlier. It is a "visus et affirmacio," such as an official drew up when he was handing things over to a successor. Ralph de Mordon was Abbot's Treasurer at the moment, and Brother Reginald—no doubt, de Hadham—was standing by to take over from him. The date of the "view"[1] was the Monday after St. Botolph's Day (17 June), 1289, "on which day," as it says, "the account aforesaid was closed and put away under seal in the said lord Abbot's cupboards". The period of the "view" is *c.* 20 March, 1288—*c.* 17 June, 1289, and it is divided into three smaller periods, each of which is balanced up. From *c.* 20 March, 1288, to 29 September, 1288, the receipts were £149 10s. 3d.; and the expenses £149 9s. 9d. The second "rotulus" carries us on to 20 March, 1289, and we find receipts £259 9s. 10¾d.; expenses £259 6s. 9½d. The third goes to *c.* 17 June, 1289, when the receipts were £132 5s. 11d., and the expenses £130 10s. 11¼d., besides one mark which the Abbot personally handed to the Nuns of Kilburn. Probably, if we had the details, we should find the balance of each "rotulus" carried forward to the next, but anyhow Wenlok had only £1 1s. 7¾d. over as the result of fifteen months' care. Ralph de Mordon adds that 20s. remained in the treasury by tallies to the account of Brother Reginald to whom the keys of the treasury were handed there and then. Ralph also acknowledges that he himself had in various ways received 22s. which by the lord Abbot's leave he had expended on a bed for himself and other necessaries and on a "tabula" intended for the

[1] *Mun.* 24682.

Abbot's altar. So neither he nor the Abbot was much the richer.

Nor is there any reason to accuse Wenlok of extravagance. He appears to have purchased what he needed wisely and to have insisted that there should be no expenditure without his warrant. Where he could, he supplied himself from his estates and told his Bailiffs to charge him what was right in their next compotus. When he wants timber, he has a wood at Greenford,[1] from which he can obtain it; all that is needed is a mandate[2] for the provision "against next Friday" of sufficient bread, beer and fish—for they are good Churchpeople—to feed the workmen who are bringing the timber to the Thamesside, where the Abbot's carts will be ready to transfer it to his boat, which will bring it cheaply enough to Westminster. When his coal-cellar needs replenishing, he calls in aid his Provost at Denham, who is told[3] to purchase with all speed thirty quarters of large coal from Russelepe (Ruislip), to arrange with the merchants about cartage, and to have it consigned to Brother Henry Payn at Westminster. As the same mandate calls for sixty geese against Michaelmas and 100 fish from his ponds, we get an idea of the retinue that he must feed at La Neyte; but the cost of getting the food thither was 1½d. a day for the person who conveyed it. If the farms failed him, he went to his London poulterer, one John of Sawbridgeworth; a bill of the said John for £2 6s. 1d. was paid by Henry Payn, 24 April, 1307;[4] and his fishmonger, William de Folham, received in the previous November £10 3s. 5d.[5]; perhaps both accounts had been allowed to "run" for a time. Purchases of wine were frequent; but we cannot judge of the frequency without knowing the number of his guests. Wenlok had no hesitation in saying that he wanted good wine for the sake of his health, especially in

[1] Cf. p. 81. [2] *Mun.* 31530.
[3] *Mun.* 31447 = 9 August, 1306. [4] *Mun.* 31479. [5] *Mun.* 31461.

his closing years. Evidently his taste was for Bordeaux, for his regular vintner was Bernard de la Rochelle. Thus on the sight of *Mun.* 31475 = 2 April, 1307—when Cardinal Peter's visit was at hand—Henry Payn and Bernard were to lay down at La Neyte "one tun of good wine for the good of his health"; Brother William de Chalk was coming and would explain how a partition could be made in the cellar for two tuns, and Brother John de Wenlok should see that the work was carried out. During 1306 and 1307 the letters show these orders or payments in the same connection: £11 19s. 3d. to Bernard for six casks (18 Feb., 1306)[1]; Henry Payn to take Bernard with him and buy three casks for the Abbot's use (10 Aug., 1306)[2]; £11 12s. 6d. to Bernard for eleven casks, doubtless for those who sat below the salt (26 Nov., 1306)[3]; £1 10s. to Bernard for a pipe of wine (25 March, 1307)[4]; and £5 10s. 4d. for two casks of wine "for our use" bought from Bernard and for the carriage of them from London to the Isle, when there came with them a third cask which he owed to the kindness of a friend (carriage 1s. 10d.). There is nothing in this which is out of proportion to the general expenditure; in fact, it hardly seems as extravagant as a bill from John de Boreford amounting to £7 13s. 6d. for wax and divers spices bought of him.[5]

But either his position as a great landowner or the need of securing powerful support for the Convent and for his own status in it necessitated a constant stream of largess. What this system of giving presents might come to within a given period we can realise more or less from any account-roll that we open, but there are documents which offer an unusually clear opportunity of seeing the custom, as it were, in bulk. For instance, we have a bundle of the accounts[6] of the Abbot's special friend, Alexander de Persore—not the less his special friend because he was at

[1] *Mun.* 31395. [2] *Mun.* 31450. [3] *Mun.* 31464.
[4] *Mun.* 31474. [5] *Mun.* 31462. [6] *Mun.* 24498 (1-4).

times in close partnership with Reginald de Hadham[1]—and all of these refer to the expenses of the Abbot's mansion in 1289-90. On the back of the first is the "account of Brother Alexander de Persore about the jewels ('iocalia' or valuables) of the lord W. by the grace of God Abbot of Westminster from the day of the Nativity of St. John Baptist in the 17th year of the reign of King Edward to Wednesday next before the feast of the Nativity of the blessed virgin Mary in the 18th year" (24 June, 1289—*c.* 8 Sept., 1290). The list describes all the presents thus purchased and how they were bestowed, and it is worth giving in detail. Persore, it must be remembered, is drawing up an account of valuables in terms of valuables; he adds the cost of each, but his balance is stated, not in money, but in valuables.

We begin with two silver bowls ("pelues argentee") bought for the King at the price of £6 8s.; the account states that they were sent to the King; so the "summa" is "ij pelues et nil remanet". Then he buys for 11½ marks[2] a silver ewer which goes to the Bishop of Bath and Wells. Robert Burnell had at this time recently returned from a long sojourn in France with Edward, and was nearing the close of his powerful and grasping career. Walter de Wenlok evidently found it necessary to stand well with him, for he added a silver goblet presently, and in another parchment[3] of the same bundle there is mention of a present to this Bishop of two dozen capons from the manor of Eye and elsewhere, of which his need was not great, for he possessed some eighty manors of his own. There follows a purchase of gilt cups at the following prices:—£5 17s. 8d., £2 1s. 8d., £2 3s. 4d., £2, and £1 15s. —five in all; of which one (doubtless the first and most costly) was sent to the Bishop aforesaid; one to my lord

[1] See *Monks of Westminster*, p. 62.

[2] "Pro xj mar. et mar."; probably "dimidia" may have been dropped out before the second "mar.".

[3] *Mun.* 24498 (3).

Peter de Chauent, the King's Seneschal; one to John de Botetourte, a baron and admiral and a well-known warrior of King Edward; one to Ralph del Marche; the fifth was retained for future use. The next gifts are described as "cuppe argentee sine auro," costing respectively £2 9s. 2d., £1 16s. 8d., £2 1s., £2 10s. 2d., £1 18s. 5d., £2 0s. 8d., £1 16s.; two of the seven were given to Isolde la Wynn and William de Munjevel; "et remanent v.". We pass to "ficalia[1] maiora," six of gold being bought "against the arrival of the King in England,"—for on 28 July, 1289, Edward returned from his long absence in France and Gascony[2]—at 13s. a piece; and these were presented to six servants of the King's retinue, namely, Roger de Frecourt, of the Prince's retinue, Recherico (not further specified), Master Martin, Martin the door-keeper of the Queen's chamber, William, the King's marshal, and Sir Walter de Fancourt, also the King's marshal. So again, there are six "ficalia mediocria," three at 11s. and three at 9s., of which four are given to Hamo, the King's door-keeper, John the clerk of the King's marshal, the wife of Hugh de Padinton and the wife of Roger de Piuuelesdone, while the Abbot takes the remaining two to Wenlock as remembrances to unnamed friends in his native town. The "ficalia minora," though still of gold, can be obtained for 4s. each, and number twenty-three. All but four of these were given away to the following persons—N. Harcourt, John le Tailur, Peter de Comminge, John the door-keeper, the clerk of Ralph del Marche before-mentioned, Hamo de Barre, or de la Barre, whose name is of frequent occurrence among those of the Abbey's retainers at this time; the Abbot's mother, that she may have an offering to make at St. Edward's Shrine on her first arrival at Westminster[3]; eleven "masuarii Regis"; and Andrew the crier. The remaining four were taken to Wenlock.

We pass to silk purses and come upon a prudent plan

[1] ? = *fiscalia*; i.e. tributes.

[2] *Chronicles*, Ed. i., Ed. ii. (R.S.), i. 97.

[3] See p. 54.

of using gifts received as gifts to bestow. One such purse is already in the Abbot's cupboards, having been left there, it is stated, by Brother Ralph de Mordon, whose tenure of the wardenship of the Abbot's mansion had ceased on 20 March, 1289.[1] Besides this, the Abbot had been presented with silk purses by R. le Garlonder and Margery de Tondesleye. He now gives one of these to Henry Podding with some money, and so has two still in store.

The last set of gifts in this list consists of knives, of which there is mention of no fewer than thirty-seven; and again some of these were originally presents from others. One pair "cum grossis ymaginibus" came from Master J. de Deneby, who was constantly in the Abbey's employ as a man-of-law; another pair, also engraved, was given to him by Brother Simon de Gardino, who was almost of the Abbot's standing as a monk, was concerned as Proctor for the Convent in the steps that led to his installation, and at this time was involved on the Abbot's behalf in the controversy about William of Pershore, the apostate Franciscan;[2] a similar pair was acquired by purchase and one, without ornamentation,[3] had been left in store by Ralph de Mordon; there was also a pair of Parma knives, the gift of John de Bruges; two pairs of "cultelli de oigen" were obtained, one by purchase, and one as a gift from Brother Adam de Wycumbe. Finally, the warden bought thirty to be given away at Wenlock. And now to dispose of all this complimentary cutlery, the money value of which is not stated. Engraved pairs were given to the Abbot of Fécamp, to Sir Roland de Abevile, to some one at Sutton—"in my absence," says Brother Alexander, renouncing responsibility for the worthiness of the recipient—and to Roland de Merlawe for some service that was expected of him. The thirty were distributed at Wenlock, and there remained three in hand for future distribution,

[1] *Mun.* 24495, *Monks of Westminster*, p. 64.
[2] Cf. *ibid*, p. 62. [3] "Plani operis."

namely, a pair "cum grossis ymaginibus," the Parma pair, and a third "cum simplicibus ymaginibus".

It remains for us to get some idea of the cost of this distribution, apart from the knives and the purses. The total paid for valuables was £47 16s. 7d., and there was very little left when the claims of all possible recipients had been met. Speaking broadly, we may put it that the Abbot within a period of less than fifteen months distributed in gratuities more than a tenth part of the gross revenue for one year from the abbatial portion.

The result was that he was frequently in debt. Sometimes we come upon a document which admits the fact and masses his liabilities together, or as much of them as he could pay off. Sometimes we have to collect the indications from a number of documents. As an instance of the first we may take a parchment[1] dated 21 September, 1291, at a time when, as appears from a long account of disbursements,[2] he was sojourning in France, perhaps because he could not face creditors in England; certainly he was still borrowing during his journey.

"These," it says, "are the debts of the lord Abbot of Westminster for which he was liable to his creditors on the feast of St. Matthew in the nineteenth year of the reign of King Edward: namely, to the lord Eustace de Bacche, £50; to Walter Hermas of Guildford, for cloth, £32 9s.; to John of Sawbridgeworth [his poulterer], £10; to Thomas Romayn,[3] £40; to Robert Persun, skinner, £13 6s. 8d.; to Walter de Wenlok, £40; to Gilbert Daleroun, £1 11s. 8d.; to Adam of St. Albans, £2 5s.; to Juliana Hathgo, 17s.; to Margere de Tondesle [whom we have found giving him a silk purse],[4] £1 4s.; to the Prioress of Kilburn, £5 6s. 8d.; to John de Cardoil, £1 3s.; to John his servant,

[1] *Mun.* 5422. [2] *Mun.* 24500.

[3] A Jewish financier who frequently accommodated him.

[4] See p. 119.

£1 5s. 7½d.; to Dan. J., rector of the church of St. Clement,[1] £6 13s. 4d.; to James, the Seneschal, £60; to William de Fonte, 10s.; to Walter de Rokesle, 13s. 4d.; to Robert de Littleburi, being his pension for the 18th year of Edward, £3 6s. 8d.; and to Ralph de Honilane for wine, £4 4s. And if the aforesaid creditors can show that we are liable to them for these sums by producing either tallies or written evidence, then let them receive payment in full."

The total of these sums is £274 15s. 11½d., and it is some evidence of the Abbot's powers of financial recuperation that he was in a position to give orders for the payment of so much money at a given moment.

But his letters bear frequent testimony that at all times in his career his need to borrow was more or less prevalent. Thus, *c.* 12 March, 1287, he ordered[2] payment to the merchants of Siena "for an old debt," £53 6s. 8d.; to Robert de Colleworth, £29 16s. 9¼d.; and to Thomas Romayn, £52 16s. 9d.; besides some tradesmen's bills, including £26 13s. 4d. to his tailor. He borrowed from Mistress Romayn as well. On 31 October, 1295, his Treasurers were bidden to pay £10 to Juliana Hauteyn, wife of Thomas Romayn of London, in respect of a loan from her, and a further £20 in 1298.[3] It is no wonder at this rate that we find a missive,[4] undated, to some Provost of a manor not specified, that if Thomas Romayn's son should come into those parts he and his party were to be honourably received and their needs supplied. At times the Abbot was obliged to pledge his jewels, and so we get an instruction[5] to the Treasurers at Michaelmas, 1299, Wenlok being then at Eye, to hand £11 to Brother Reymund de Wenlok in order that he may buy cloth and also get

[1] No doubt St. Clement, Eastcheap, the advowson of which belonged then to the Abbot and Convent of Westminster.

[2] *Mun.* 31273.

[3] *Mun.* 31293, 31377.

[4] *Mun.* 31601.

[5] *Mun.* 31378.

the Abbot's jewels out of pawn. At times he seems to have let the household bills accumulate for six or seven months and to have made a payment when he could. Take, for instance, one of his last surviving mandates,[1] 22 July, 1307, which is addressed to Brother Henry Payn. It was written at "Insula beside Westminster" and directed that under the oversight of Brother Alexander de Persore and of Thomas de Langeford, the Wardens of his Hospice, the sum of £56 6s. 9d. should be delivered to the various creditors in London who had supplied the needs of the establishment from the preceding Christmas to what is sometimes called "even date," both days inclusive. Payn was to keep a private tally of these disbursements, which would be allowed to him on account. Here, then, are tradesmen's bills for seven months at the rate of £8 a month, and it has to be remembered that a large part of the provisioning of the Hospice was met out of the manors, and the cost of it allowed to the Bailiffs in each case. No doubt the expenditure is heavy but there is no proof that it was lavish.

It has already been hinted that a long sojourn of Wenlok in foreign parts may possibly be attributed to the difficulty of maintaining his establishment at home. In any case the journey itself is a curious and otherwise unexplained incident in his career. The financial record of it—and we have no other—is contained in a long compotus roll,[2] of which the beginning is lost and which nowhere mentions the year to which it belongs. It starts with Sunday, 24 June, "in aduentu domini apud Everi"—which, perhaps, is Evry-Petit-Bourg, between Juvisy and Corbeil on the Seine, less than twenty miles south of Paris. The years of Wenlok's reign in which 24 June fell on a Sunday were 1285, 1291, 1296 and 1302. We may dispose at once of 1296, as we can follow his course through the home manors during almost the whole of that year by means of other documents. We have little knowledge of

[1] *Mun.* 31491. [2] *Mun.* 24500.

the Abbot's doings in either 1285 or 1302 but both dates seem to lie outside the *floruit* of Brother Thomas of Colchester who accompanied the Abbot on his long tour; for of him we first hear through his association with Wenlok's affairs in October, 1290, and we lose sight of him after 1293.[1] This points to 1291 as the year which we should choose out of the four, and the choice is corroborated by one of the Abbot's letters,[2] which is an order to his two Treasurers, Brother Thomas de Lenton and Brother Reymund de Wenlok, to deliver certain borrowed money to Brother Alexander de Persore whom he is sending home on business. This letter was written from "Seintry," near "Corboil," on 29 May, 1291, nearly a month before our compotus starts its record. The question whether the tour before us had begun at that time is settled by an entry on the verso of the cost of shoeing the horses of the party from Easter to Michaelmas. The Abbot, then, had certainly left England by Easter, 1291,[3] and as he reached Boulogne again on 22 November the sojourn abroad lasted at least seven months.

It might be assumed that as part of 1290 and the earlier months of 1291 were occupied by the Convent's dispute with the Franciscan Order about the alleged retention of the apostate Friar, William of Pershore, Wenlok went abroad to be out of the way. But the "composicio"[4] between the two parties, which bears date Orvieto ("apud Vrbem ueterem"), 4 April, 1291, and which was emphatically favourable to the Franciscans, was varied by an instrument dated 21 April, in such a way as to suit his convenience. The arbitrator, says this instrument,[5] has heard that the Abbot is on the Continent and is likely to make some stay there;[6] if, therefore, it suits him to make the prescribed

[1] *Monks of Westminster*, p. 65.

[2] *Mun.* 31276; it is the only letter of 1291.

[3] *Mun.* 9242 enables us to trace him on a progress through the manors up to 23 February, 1291.

[4] *Mun.* 6387; cf. *Mon. Francisc.*, II, 35 ff. [5] *Mun.* 6396.

[6] Ac eciam sit ibidem, ut dicitur, futuris temporibus permansurus.

purgation personally in Paris, he may do so; or he may make it in Paris by proxy, provided that he repeats the act in person on his return home. The arbitrator's licence[1] to the Dean of St. Paul's and others to absolve the Abbot and Convent, dated 17 April, definitely refers to Wenlok as "nunc in partibus Francie existentem". So we need have no further hesitation in ascribing our undated compotus of the journey in question to the year 1291, and may at the same time confess that the trouble with the Franciscans offers no sufficient solution of the problem why it was necessary for him to be abroad from April, or earlier, to the end of November.

During all these months Wenlok was moving about within quite a small circumference, and the following are repeatedly mentioned as places at which he was spending his time—"Everi," Melun, "Moretto" (Moret), "Noua Villa" (perhaps Villeneuve-la-Guyard on the Yonne), "Sannz in Burgundia" (Sens), then back by Moret and Melun to Seyntry beyond Corbeil for a week, then up to "Noua Villa sancti Georgii," where the Yères runs into the Seine, then a fortnight at Evry with an occasional return to Seyntry, then a stay at "Funtaynes," which we may take to be Fontainebleau, where the daily expenses suddenly rise, as travellers have found to be the case there since Wenlok's time; indeed, he remained at Fontainebleau for most of October and started thence for home on 7 November. It is evident that Alexander de Persore returned from England after his journey thither to fetch money in May; for he was despatched to England again in August, his journey-money being £1 9s. 6½d.

Now there is not a word in the compotus as to the causes of this sojourn abroad. Both at Moret and at Melun there were fine churches at this time, but the district was not a centre of Benedictine activity. The only inhabitants mentioned by name are a certain Petrus Gencianus and his wife, of Corbeil, and they appear because at the begin-

Mun. 6388.

ning the Abbot paid 1s. 6½d. for wine drunk at Peter's house, and because before leaving the country he sent a present costing 4s. 6½d. "uxori domini Genciani". The real interest of the document centres in the efforts to raise money, in which the chief agent was the young monk, Thomas of Colchester. Most of these details are given on the verso of the roll without dates attached, but we can guess the month from the position at which they appear. At the end of June Thomas and a man-at-arms are sent to Paris for three days at an expense of 7s. "pro negociis domini," and we have to judge of the nature of the business from subsequent entries; for in the middle of July Colchester was again in Paris, definitely for the purpose of borrowing money; a fortnight later his lord's business took him to Burgundy for five days, again with an armed escort (12s. 6d.). August saw Brother Thomas in Paris on two visits, both for the same purpose, and on one of them he took two guards with him, for he was going "pro argento mutuando de Judeo". His business on the second journey was to redeem the Abbot's jewels, and that time he paid the Jew 4s. 4½d. for a loan of £24 (French) for three weeks and a half. Later in August the Abbot purchased for £37 10s. a palfrey, which was taken to England, and shortly afterwards Thomas of Colchester again journeyed to Paris to seek both for money and the palfrey, and stayed there five days to make other purchases. The autumn was coming on, and he laid out 10s. "pro supertunicis hiemalibus," but it is more curious in the circumstances to find an expenditure of £4 6s. 2½d. on valuables for the Abbot—silver girdles, knives, and other "res minute," as well as the present, already recorded, for Mistress Gencian.

Apart from these financial fluctuations the details give us little idea of his life abroad. There are the usual arrangements for personal cleanliness in a payment to a "lotrix" for washing the habits from Midsummer to Michaelmas. It is apparent that Wenlok hired a house at Seyntry, a payment of 7½d. being made "pro domo

mundando apud Seynt," and the house was provided with a chapel; but the whole establishment was on a small scale, as we may fairly conclude from an outlay of 11¼d., when it was about to be vacated, "pro emendacione domorum et stabuli". During July it was twice necessary to call in a barber from Corbeil and to pay him 2d. for blood-letting of my lord and some others.

The whole document gives the impression that the great man had gone to France for a quiet time. He had only two monks with him, Alexander de Persore and Thomas de Colecestria, and only a few servants are mentioned, such as Hugo le Chaucer (a good Westminster name), Richard de Birchurst and Thomas de Piuuelesdone; his four horses, including the "great palfrey," and his grooms were transported over the channel from "Wytsaund,"[1] near Boulogne, for £1 3s. 7½d.

We saw that Wenlok started homeward on 7 November, 1291, and we have reason for recording that he was at Westminster before 11 December. For on that day Edward I issued at Stepney a public statement about an interesting ceremony in which the Abbot had just played the chief part. In his life-time (as the King knew) his father, Henry III, had shown marked affection for the Abbey of Fontevrault, near Saumur, in Anjou; Henry II and Richard I were both buried there, and it was the last resting-place of other members of the Royal House. Henry III had therefore promised that, while his body should remain at Westminster, his heart should be given to the custody of Fontevrault. This Abbey was at once monastery and nunnery, with an Abbess ruling over both, and, when Walter de Wenlok reached England, he found that the great lady had arrived here to receive delivery of her promised treasure. Edward I therefore records[2] that with his consent, and, indeed, at his command, on the Monday next after the Feast of St. Lucy the Virgin, in the presence of Anthony de Bek, Bishop of Durham, Robert Burnell,

[1] Cf. p. 17.

[2] *Mun.* 6318 B (see next page).

Bishop of Bath and Wells, Edmund, the King's brother, and William de Valence, his uncle, the Abbot of Westminster handed to the Abbess of Fontevrault the entire heart of King Henry III, to be by her conveyed to her Abbey and there buried.

Page 126. *Mun.* 6318 B.

Edwardus dei gracia rex Anglie dominus Hibernie et dux Aquitanie Omnibus ad quos presentes litere peruenerint salutem. Quia pro certo intelleximus quod celebris memorie dominus H. quondam Rex Anglie pater noster ipso dudum existente apud monasterium fontis Ebraldi cor suum post eius decessum eidem monasterio promisit et dilecta nobis in Christo Abbatissa monasterii predicti nuper in Angliam accedens cor illud iuxta promissionem predictam petiit liberari Dilectus nobis in Christo Walterus Abbas Westmonasteriensis cor predictum integrum in presencia venerabilium patrum A. Dunelmiensis, R. Bathoniensis et Wellensis episcoporum et dilectorum et fidelium nostrum Edmundi fratris nostri et Willelmi de Valencia auunculi nostri et aliorum fidelium nostrorum plurimorum die Lune proxima ante festum beate Lucie virginis anno regni nostri vicesimo in ecclesia Westmonasterii predicte Abbatisse de voluntate et precepto nostro liberauit ad predictum monasterium fontis Ebraldi deferendum et sepeliendum in eodem. In cuius rei testimonium has literas nostras fieri fecimus patentes. Teste me ipso apud Stebenhethe. xi die Decembris anno regni nostri vicesimo (11 December, 1291).

CHAPTER VIII.

THE COMPOSITIONS.

An early intimation of the growing dissension between the Abbot and his brethren may be obtained from a notarial instrument[1] dated on the Monday before the feast of St. Lawrence (10 Aug.) in the year 1295. The proceedings therein described took place in the hospice of the Bishop of London, the See being then occupied by Richard de Gravesend, who had already been at cross purposes with our monastery and whose career was involved in quarrels about the collection of dues payable by the clergy to the secular authority. But the matter now in debate was the system by which the Abbey should pay what was demanded by the Pope. Certain Cardinals had been sent to England by the Holy See for the purpose of gathering in the procurations granted to them, and their delegates in this collection were present at the Bishop's house on the day in question. The notary public who records the proceedings was William de Cosseby, commonly called de Lanthone. Before this company there appeared two monks of Westminster as Proctors for the Prior and Convent. The Prior was John de Coleworth,[2] of whom we know very little, and of whom we could not assert that he was still alive at this time, if it were not that the document is endorsed "procuracio Prioris J. de Coleworthe". We come upon him first in 1278 when he was Sacrist, and it is safe to assume that he had then attained some seniority as a monk. When he became Prior we do not know, but he held that office at Richard de Ware's death in 1283 and

[1] *Mun.* 9499 A. [2] *Monks of Westminster*, p. 59.

at Abbot Wenlok's election on the last day of that year. At the moment with which we are concerned he was the titular head of his brethren in the protest which they thought it right to make against the Abbot's method of satisfying the Papal claims for financial aid.

But, though the Prior was the chief figure in the background, the middle of the picture is occupied for our purposes by the two monks who appear in the Convent's behalf—"Religiosi viri fratres Reginaldus de Hadham et Radulphus de Mordon". The latter is an instance of Abbot Wenlok's inability to retain the allegiance of his friends. At this time he was still a young monk, not much over thirty years of age. For we hear of him first in the year 1288,[1] when he was selected by Wenlok as his "capellanus," that is to say, as a junior monk whom he borrowed from the Convent to go about with him on his journeys.

Having found him faithful in this spiritual and social capacity, the Abbot further set him in responsibility over all that he had, making him Warden of his establishment, "custos hospicii Abbatis," and we are fortunately able to turn to the account-roll[2] which Ralph de Mordon kept in order to state all the costs of the abbatial maintenance from Michaelmas day, 1288, to 20 March, 1289. The Feast of St. Michael, which fell on a Sunday, found the Abbot that year at Westminster, whither he returned, not, according to his wont, for St. Edward's Feast, but only for a week just before Christmas; but he spent a fortnight in February and March at the neighbouring manor of Eye. With those exceptions he was away at his various estates, Claygate and Pyrford in Surrey, and Laleham in Middlesex, with a brief call at Rickmansworth and Berkhamstead. At Michaelmas he was keeping much company at Westminster. There were thirty-three horses in the stables, and the Warden paid for considerable supplies of bread,

[1] *Monks of Westminster*, p. 64. [2] *Mun.* 24495.

corn, wine, beer, beef, and pork. He bought a swan and a crane, each for 6s.; partridges for 6s. 6d.; larks for 2s.; pigeons for 2s. 6d.; plovers for 8d. The Abbot's cheese cost 2s. 1d., but the kitchen cheese, "in caseo pro coquina," was got for 3d. When Friday came there was still more company, for the horses had increased to thirty-nine, but the *menu* consisted of a fish diet—herring, cod, conger, whiting, haddock, eels, and "welkes".

The Warden of the Hospice was also responsible for payments to various persons whose services or whose needs the Abbot desired to recognise. Quite a number of courtiers receive at his hands complimentary gifts—an ox or a pig, generally of about 12s. in market value. His lordship had occasional entertainers, three actors and a boy at Westminster, and a dancer from Chertsey who appeared before him at Pyrford, and it was the Warden's business to pay them a small fee. The monks also add to the total of these benefactions; Alexander de Persore,[1] then Sacrist of the Convent, is familiar to us in other connexions, but we owe to this compotus a momentary acquaintance with Brother Nicholas de Depedene and Brother R. de Bermondsey, who receive 2s. and 10s. respectively, for some unspecified service done to the Abbot. Thereafter they appear no more in our records, for the time of full conventual lists was not yet,[2] though it was drawing near.

But there are other payments in Ralph de Mordon's

[1] The payment of ixs. to A. de Persore, though a matter of ordinary routine, is not without interest. The entry runs: "Allocat' fratri A. de P. sacriste Westm. ubi inhabitantur pelliparij ixs.". With this we must compare an injunction in the earlier of the charters concerned with Wenlok's anniversary (Domesday, f. 87; *Flete*, p. 120), which says that "our Sacrist of Westminster for the time being is to receive £4 sterling from the houses in the Market of St. Edward allotted to the skinners; yet in such wise that on the morrow of St. Barbara [5 Dec.] in each year there should be delivered to each professed monk by the hands of the said Sacrist the sum of 12d. to buy spice," the balance, if any, to provide wine and a pittance for the Convent on the aforesaid day.

[2] *Monks of Westminster*, pp. 12 ff.

account which brought him much closer to his master's interests. For Wenlok kept, as we have seen, a very warm place in his heart for his native town and his home, and above all his mother. The poor folk of the Shropshire town knew this, and sought him out where he was. "Cuidam pauperi de Wenlak ii^{s}" may be taken as an instance of their success, while the establishment was at Pyrford. The Abbot also maintained, as we have seen, constant communication with the place of his birth, and at this time his instrument for this purpose was one Richard Engelard de Wenlak, who is described as "nuncius suus". Ralph was succeeded in this office during 1289 by Alexander de Persore, but had held it long enough to get very close to his master's personal and private concerns. Yet now in the proceedings to which we refer he is a Proctor against the Abbot and for the Convent.

Ralph's colleague, Reginald de Hadham, was a much more prominent member of the body, and his relations with the Abbot were both more continuously close and more tragically broken. He frequently intervenes in our story of the Abbot, but his career can conveniently be outlined at this point. The county of Hertford gave the Abbey not a few of its early recruits, such as Hugh of St. Albans, Theobald and Guy and John of Ashwell, Simon of Titeburst, Richard and Nicholas of Ware, and Roger of Aldenham; and we may reasonably assign to Reginald as his birthplace either Much or Little Hadham in the same county. We do not possess the date of his entry into our House, but by 1286 he was held in sufficient esteem to be sent to Rome during the Papacy of Honorius IV.[1]

He was again in Rome in 1298, leaving England about 19 May in company with Alexander de Persore and starting back from the Holy City, where his companion remained to finish the Convent's business, on 20 July.[2] It was an expensive undertaking and the physical effort was

Monks of Westminster, p. 63; *Mun.* 28821.

[2] *Monks of Westminster*, pp. 62, 63.

great. We have the financial record of his return journey.[1] Day after day he pressed on from place to place, seldom spending two nights in the one spot—Florence, Lucca, Parma, Piacenza, Lausanne, Troyes, Paris—and only when he reached the Channel and saw it tossed with tempest—"propter ventum contrarium"—did he halt for three nights; and he passed through "Roffa" and "Derteford," on the forty-third day after his start from Rome.

At this time Hadham had already been for four years the Almoner of the Monastery, and he continued to hold this and other offices till he stepped up to the Priorship. We find him as Pittancer, as Warden of the Manors newly granted in memory of Queen Alianore,[2] as Refectorer, as Warden of the Lady Chapel, and as Gardener; indeed, it is only in his case that we get the full title of that functionary—"Custos Gardini Conventus Westm. apud la Charring"[3]—for in later times it was usual for the Cellarer to double the part of Gardener, just as at the present time the Chapter office of Steward involves the oversight of the Abbey gardens and greens. At Michaelmas, 1303, he was appointed Sacrist in succession to Adam de Warfeld, who apparently retained his important office till that time in spite of his alleged atrocious guilt in the matter of the robbery of the Royal Treasury during the previous April. But it is more to our point that brother Reginald, who was Proctor in the case before us, was fighting for the property of the Convent against the Abbot, and who, as we shall see, was deposed and excommunicated by the Abbot later on in the same connexion, became in 1304-5, receiver of the Abbot's revenues—"Receptor denariorum Abbatis"; thus in between the one struggle with Wenlok and the other he was constantly and intimately connected with the great man's affairs, and in our records of the abbatial manors—receipts, orders to pay, and the like—from 1293

[1] *Mun.* 9250.
[2] *Monks of Westminster*, pp. 15 ff.
[3] *Mun.* 5701.

to 1305, no name occurs more frequently than his. Thus, again, it was a quarrel between close friends.

We return, then, to the Bishop of London's mansion in the hope of ascertaining the main facts of the case. It is early in August, we remember, and we know, that the Cardinals had arrived in this country on 1 July,[1] with a double purpose. On the one hand, they were to assuage the strife that was raging between France and England, and in this respect the King desired that they should be honourably received, summoning the chief estates of the realm to assemble at Westminster on 5 August. On the other hand, the Cardinals,[2] as usual, were enjoined to collect money in the shape of procurations at the rate of the 6 marks from each religious house, and, if this proved insufficient, at the rate of 4d. in the mark from the parish churches. As our document mentions 6 marks demanded by the Cardinals as procurations on the Monday before 10 August, and the *Flores Historiarum* mentions the same in close connexion with 5 August, we are clearly concerned with one and the same incident. The attempt of their Eminences to make peace was vain, and our Proctors were eager that the efforts to exact the procurations should not upset the established usages of the Convent. For a long time, they urged, there had been a composition or ordinance prevailing between the Abbot of the one part and the Prior and Convent of the other part, and they were anxious not to invalidate their composition by making any payment of money to Cardinals or Nuncios of the Apostolic See in the form of procurations, as if it were a debt due, but only by way of courtesy,[3] and out of respect for their Eminences. It was necessary, they contended, to

[1] *Flores Historiarum*, iii. 279, and note.

[2] For the Bull of Pope Boniface VIII, "de Nunciis ad Regem super pace inter ipsum et Franciae Regem reformanda destinatis," 19 February, 1295, see Rymer, *Foedera*, ii. 669. The Cardinals are entered as "B. Albanensem [Berald, Bishop of Albano] et S. Penestrinensem" [Simon, Bishop of Preneste]. Cf. p. 80 *sup.*

[3] "Per viam curialitatis."

avoid any admission of servitude, such as a single payment of this sort would imply for the Convent; it was necessary also to beware lest the Abbot should take opportunity from their compliance on this occasion with the Cardinals' demands to proclaim the said composition as thereby broken and abrogated. Moreover, the composition in question contained words to this effect, that when Legates or Nuncios of the Pope, having twelve or more horses,[1] come to England and visit Westminster, the Abbot is bound to provide for them and for their horses at his own charges, i.e. out of the Abbot's portion, and the cost of this is not to fall on the Convent nor on its Hostillar.[2] I have seen these words myself, says Brother Reginald, in the composition, with the seal of the right reverend the Abbot of Westminster attached, and they are there to this day, "non cancellata non abolita nec in sui parte aliqua uiciata".

It is a pity that we are unable to describe the exact nature of the composition that caused these divisions of heart, though we can go some way towards the tracing of its descent. In 1225, during the fourth year of his Abbacy, Richard de Berking, says Flete,[3] drew up a composition or agreement at the earnest request of the Convent, the purpose of which was that in the bond of unity the members of the House should cleave more closely to their head with a view to their sustenance in bread and beer and to the discharging of their legal obligations as regards the manors, rents, possessions, and isolated properties. For this composition, which, as Widmore[4] naturally concludes, was "very much to their satisfaction," all the monks gave Abbot Richard their hearty thanks, "tanquam patri et pastori".

Now, though we do not possess this arrangement of Abbot Berking as a separate document, it was carefully transcribed, probably under Abbot Wenlok's eye, if not with his consent, into our great Domesday chartulary,[5] and

[1] "Eueccionęs."
[2] "nec ad custodem hospitalitatis."
[3] p. 106.
[4] *History of Westminster Abbey*, p. 41.
[5] Domesday, ff. 629*b*-631.

its provisions give us a real insight into the methods of conventual administration. The general title runs as we have already had it on Flete's authority. First, he assigned to the Convent certain manors—Feering, Essex; Stevenage, Wheathampstead and Aldenham, Herts; Battersea and Wandsworth, Surrey; Knightsbridge, Middlesex; farms at Kelvedon, Essex, and Hendon, Middlesex, in wheat, grout, and malt; a yearly sum of 10 marks hitherto payable by the Convent Chamberlain to the Abbots for clothing, and one of £8, which they had received for the tithes of Wych (Droitwich); towards the cost of fires in the offices of the Cellarer, certain fee-farms from Denham, Bucks, Holwell, Beds, and Datchworth, Herts; and a brewery at Pyrford, Surrey. He gave the yearly pension of £6 received by his predecessors from the church of Oakham to pay the salaries of the Convent in the Court of Westminster and to provide commons for the carters employed by the House. He set aside a payment of £5 made by the Prior of Hurley out of the profits of Easthamstead manor in Berkshire, to meet the cost of repairing the dormitory, the refectory, the bakehouse, the malthouse, the granary and the kitchen. He assigned the Westminster mills and their profits to the Convent, only reserving to the Abbot free multure of wheat, grout, and malt.

Then, with regard to the expensive item of the Convent's duty as hosts to various guests, invited or uninvited, especially persons who, when the King came to town, claimed to receive full liveries, for this he assigned the church of Staines and the moiety of the church of Wathamstede (Wheathampstead); also £10 from Wokendone (North Ockendon, Essex) and £8 from the vill of Westminster, as well as half the hay and herbage harvested from the Abbey's Westminster meadows, undertaking at the same time to provide hay for the obedientiaries out of the Abbot's moiety of the crop. Moreover, this large provision for the entertainment of strangers was felt to be enough to occupy the full attention of one monk or more in its management;

so the Abbot was to appoint a monk, or two, over this business by the assent of the Convent. Also over the manors and properties of the Convent's portion he was to appoint such brethren as the Convent might nominate to him, and he must remove them from office, not of his own accord, unless there was reasonable cause, but only when the Convent should deem the removal expedient. The officer appointed to take charge of the property thus allocated to the purposes of entertainment was called the "Custos Hospitalitatis" and sometimes the "Hostillarius"; and it was his duty to receive and make provision for all guests, of whatever rank or station,[1] except Kings, Papal Legates, Archbishops, and Nuncios having twelve horses, save also that, where the horses were intended for their sojourn at the Convent, the Abbot himself was to be responsible. But if the Abbot invited to his table or to the guest-house other monks or clerks or laymen, then the Abbot, and not the "Custos Hospitalitatis" was to pay the expenses. The Warden was to render his account of receipts and payments quarterly, according to the ordinance of the church of Wheathampstead.

But, though the Abbot assigned the revenues of these manors for such and such hospitable uses, he retained the advowsons and presentations of all the churches, which he was to bestow in accordance with the ancient custom of the House; he retained also the service of those who held therein by military service and must answer to the King for the service and the scutage due to the Crown from the church of Westminster.

As to the expenses of actions at law and the like, the Abbot at his own cost must defend all these assigned Manors before any judge secular or ecclesiastical, but clerks or laymen sent by the Abbot to the Convent manors to plead any such causes were to be entertained there and their horses baited at the cost of the Convent. If through legal action or any other chance the Convent did not re-

[1] Cf. *Customary*, ii. 79 ff.

ceive the full annual advantage from its portion, the Abbot must make up the loss out of the revenues of his portion. If he declined to guarantee this compensation, the Convent could revert to the ancient and laudable customs and to the *status quo* as regarded hospitality.

In the matter of supplies of food and drink, the Abbot gave to the Convent the right to half the cider that could be made from the gardens of Westminster, besides the fruit that the House was wont to receive. From Epiphany to Septuagesima he was to supply daily in the Misericorde a dish of flesh, in Lent the usual gruel, on Maundy Thursday bread and beer for the poor and wine and wastel-bread for the Convent; at the principal feasts and other such occasions he was to entertain all the servants of the Convent, so that on those days they were only to receive one livery from the Convent Cellarer, thus saving the resources of the brethren to that extent; and he was to maintain out of his own portion the anniversary of William of St. Marychurch, Bishop of London, providing wine and a pittance for the monks and for the poor.

As regards the upkeep of the Westminster property, the Abbot made himself responsible for preventing inundations of the Thames by constantly repairing the walls at his own charges,[1] in order to avert danger from the church of Westminster.

But the settlement of these manors upon the Convent suggested various possibilities which had to be faced. Thus the rights of the Abbey in these manors might be assailed and the Convent might decline to contend at law for such rights; in that case, if the Abbot should decide to prosecute at his own charges, then he might have for his own use whatever he could recover at law. Or something might occur in the manors to bring the Abbot, as the representative of the House, under the King's arbitrament;

[1] Thus we find Brother Thomas de Lenton (see p. 70) employed by Abbot Wenlok "ad reparacionem wallorum" in 1286 (*Mun.* 31271; *Monks of Westminster*, p. 64).

in that case the Convent's portion should pay the fine, always provided that the Abbot or his own servants were not directly responsible for the trouble. Or again, it might happen that the King claimed from the Abbot or wished to have hidage or carucage or other such service; if so, the men on the Convent's portion must provide the service for that portion.

The right to visit the manors must also be clearly delimited. Neither Abbot nor Prior on his own account should intrude himself into any possessions assigned to the Convent; it was the business of the Bailiffs appointed from among the monks to do this on the Convent's behalf. Of course, with the consent of the Convent, either Abbot or Prior could visit a Convent manor, but this must be kept within limits "lest by the manifold and frequent visits of very many persons the Convent's portion be diminished".[1] So much depended on the honesty of the men set to supervise the estates that a solemn oath was exacted of monk-bailiffs and other agents that they would work for the Convent's advantage and not for their personal profit. Neither must the corpus of the two portions be diminished by the respective parties without the consent of the other; the Convent is to get the agreement of the Abbot and the Abbot is to get the agreement of the Convent before either of them alienates property or destroys timber or makes customary tenants into freemen.

Then there was the question of the Abbot's rations when he was at Westminster. At that time he could take meals in the refectory at his pleasure; and, when he was in the refectory or within the Abbey close, or at his Westminster

[1] The point of this can be easily realised by a study of some of the hundreds of account-rolls of the Abbey manors, beginning in Richard de Ware's time, which remain among our muniments. Every visit of a monk to the property in question is recorded in the shape of the resultant expenditure. Fowls or other animals had to be killed for his table; and these are carefully deducted from the "remanets" in the list of stock. So many bushels of corn were given to his horses, for a monk seldom rode alone; and these lessened the total supply that could be delivered to the Convent Granger.

mansion at Eye, he could claim six loaves from the Cellarer; otherwise he received neither bread nor any other perquisites. Also he was free to bring guests to the refectory, up to the limit of four; for any above that number he must pay out of his own pocket.

These were the arrangements by which Richard de Berking bound himself, 11 November, 1225, and for which he received the grateful acknowledgment of his monks, who, as Widmore[1] says, "thought it so good for them, that they procured a confirmation of it from Pope Gregory the ninth". This confirmation in the time of the Domesday chartulary[2] was stored "in the first chest under the title of Gregory IX," and was dated at Anagni, 5 October, 1230. It is, however, worth noting, in view of the more acrimonious troubles which we shall have to consider, that even the generous de Berking did not long avoid some dissension with his brethren on points of administrative finance. A year and a half later we have record of a difficulty which required the arbitrament of three Bishops to settle it. The Convent was complaining that the partition of the Westminster manors between the Abbot and itself left it insufficiently provided with victuals. The parties accepted as umpires Jocelyn de Wells, Bishop of Bath and Wells, Richard Poor, Bishop of Salisbury, and Ralph de Neville, Bishop of Chichester, and their lordships, after a due invocation of the Holy Spirit's grace, added to the Convent's portion the manors of Echelesford (Ashford), Middlesex, and of Greenford in the same county, together with an annual payment of £3 from the manor of Sudborough in Northamptonshire. There were at the same time certain reservations as to timber; e.g. the Abbot retained the wood at Ashford, but the Bailiffs might take from it enough timber for making the ploughs needed on the estate, while the Abbot kept control of the cider-press at Sudborough, with the services of the servants, in case he wanted to make cider out of the little garden. On the other hand,

[1] p. 41. [2] f. 631.

if Pope or Bishops should ever grant the Abbey any churches for its advantage, one moiety of the revenues was to go to the Abbot and the other to the Convent; and, if the Convent hereafter should contract any loan, payment must be made out of its own portion and not out of the Abbot's. Thus both parties were satisfied and the award was formulated on 7 July, 1227.[1]

Richard de Berking was succeeded in 1246 by Richard de Crokesley and once again the compositions failed to work out smoothly between the House and its chief. The opening years of Crokesley's reign were marked by many quarrels on the subject,[2] and at last, with the consent of Henry III, another Bishop of Bath and Wells, William de Button, and John Mansel, Treasurer of York and Provost of Beverley, both of them being notable diplomatists in the King's service, were called upon to mediate. Their arbitrament resulted in the withdrawal of three clauses from de Berking's composition, which were evidently the chief causes of de Crokesley's contention with his brethren. The first concerned the Abbot's power over the Obedientiaries. Richard de Berking had agreed that the head of the House could only remove them from office when the Convent held it to be expedient. The arbitrators now allowed that the Abbots should be able for reasonable cause to deprive Obedientiaries of their offices. Secondly, Richard de Berking had covenanted to supply flesh-meat to be served in the Misericorde[3] daily from Epiphany to Septuagesima; but now the Abbots were to be free from this provision. The third point dealt with the visitation of the manors, as to which de Berking had consented that he might only pay such visits if the brethren agreed. Richard de Crokesley now obtained a ruling that once a year with-

[1] *Mun.* 5683 ***; Domesday, f. 632, *a*, *b*.

[2] "Quamplurimae contentiones," Flete, p. 109.

[3] On the Westminster Misericorde as an institution, cf. J. A. Robinson, *Simon Langham* (*Ch. Quart. Rev.*, July, 1908), p. 350; and on its position, cf. his *Abbot's House at Westminster*, p. 54.

out question he could inspect the chief manors assigned to the Cellarer and could correct or improve the management of them; receiving for his maintenance any fuel, litter, and hay that the manor could provide, and either oats or threepence for each of his horses up to twenty. But, while Abbot Crokesley was successful in obtaining the withdrawal of these three offending clauses—and had a reasonable case in respect of each of them—the arbitration also resulted in some points being raised to the advantage of the Convent. Thus, as to the appointment of Cellarers, it was agreed that the brethren should nominate four monks, from whom the Abbot was to select two, one to be the exterior or foreign, and the other interior or domestic Cellarer, according to tradition.[1] The one managed the estates and the rents in the country, and the functions of the other were concerned with the provisioning of the Convent from day to day. Again, the common seal, as we shall see later, could easily become a matter of contention and a means of damaging the House. So it was agreed that there should be four keys protecting it, that the Abbot should nominate a monk to have one key, that the Prior and the Sub-Prior shouid have one key each, and that the fourth should be held by a monk selected by all the brethren—an arrangement which certainly did not err on the side of undue power for the Abbot. There was a further ordinance about the appointment in similar manner of two Hostillars,[2] and also one which laid it down that

[1] In the *Customary* they are called "Celerarius forinsecus" or "exterior" and "Celerarius intrinsecus" or "interior". The first (*Cust.*, ii. 69) "curam habet super omnia maneria et res ac possessiones porcioni conventus assignata"; it belonged to the other "omnia quae in pane et cervisia conventui sunt necessaria providere" (p. 71). Evidently Abbot Berking took much pains to organise the duties and relations of these two, particularly when both were at Westminster together. For instance, if the foreign Cellarer were to be at home for several days, it was for him to carry the key of the cellar, while his colleague was content to take second place; even so, it is admitted that "aliquociens indiscreta emersa est contencio" (p. 70).

[2] Cf. *Customary*, ii. 79.

the Abbot must not send the brethren from place to place, except for reasonable cause and after proper discussion of the project with the Convent. For the rest, the previous compositions were reaffirmed in every particular and the award was sealed by the King, the Bishop, and Provost Mansel, at Woodstock, near Oxford, 16 August, 1252. It only remains to be added that when Richard de Ware had governed the House for nearly four years, he announced by letters patent his complete concurrence with these arrangements and his solemn undertaking to observe them (30 May, 1262)[1]; indeed, there is an earlier intimation that the brethren had taken his mind on this important subject before he set out for the Roman Court in January, 1260, when he informed them that, desiring to leave to his flock the peace which the Lord bequeathed to His Church, he was resolved not to make any endeavour during his visit *ad limina* to obtain any modification of these compositions.[2]

But Abbot Ware was but a short time dead, and indeed the Chapter was assembled to elect Walter de Wenlok as his successor, when, before proceeding to the election (31 Dec., 1283), the Prior, John de Coleworth, and the brethren decided and formally declared that some modification of the compositions yet remained to be enacted. As the Abbacy was vacant, they were the sole authority and could legislate as seemed to them good. Several of the changes are concerned with questions which we shall find becoming acute during Wenlok's reign and which should therefore be noticed now.

Richard de Berking had agreed to assign to the Obedientiaries a supply of hay out of his half of the crop taken from the Westminster meadows[3]; it is now decided in general terms that the Abbot is "to find hay for the Obedientiaries as their due". It is repeated that the Abbot is responsible for the entertainment of Kings, of Papal Nuncios, and of other magnates coming with twelve horses. He must furnish the Hostillar with a grange and

[1] Domesday, f. 634*b*. [2] *Ibid*, f. 637*b*. [3] Cf. p. 135.

a tithe-barn at Staines. He must not remove from office the Cellarer, the Hostillar, nor the Almoner, save at the unanimous request of the Convent, or at least of the senior monks—which is in effect a reversal of one of Abbot Crokesley's victories. He must not send any brethren away to sojourn in cells except by general consent of the rest and after due and thorough consideration. He must not imprison any monk, unless it were a clear case of theft or other heinous offence canonically proved. He must not entrust the up-keep of the Thames walls to any of the Obedientiaries, nor should he grant any corrody (or daily allowance of food) from the Convent's cellar or hostelry or from its portion, unless the same had been freely and unanimously agreed to by the brethren. He may not appoint any servants except these seven—two for the refectory, two for the infirmary, the keeper of the outer door of the cellar, the attendant in the locutory, and the stableman. He must furnish daily out of his own portion a loaf of bread and a gallon of beer to the clerks sitting at the King's great Exchequer. He must be at the expense of defending causes touching either his own portion or the Convent's portion in any court, ecclesiastical or civil. He must not exact anything whatsoever from the Convent's cellar or grange or other office, nor suffer such exaction to be made by his men, save such as were clearly stated in former compositions. He must not demand "exennia"[1] from the Domestic Cellarer, the Granger, the Gardener, or even the Warden of the Lady Chapel on the principal or other feasts, or even at the blood-letting. He should claim nothing in the way of clothing or footwear from the Chamberlain, but only a cresset to be kindled according to custom in his chamber each night when his valet was within the precincts. He must pay yearly to the Infirmarer an ancient rent for land which belonged to Laurence of Wandsworth in the vill of Todenham, Glos. He could visit the five principal

[1] I.e. "xenia," or gifts of courtesy; cf. *Monks of Westminster*, 21 ff.

Convent manors—Battersea, Surrey; Feering, Essex; Stevenage, Wheathampstead, and Aldenham, Herts—and no more, and could receive, when he went, nothing beyond what was specified in the composition made thereupon. As soon as possible after his return from the Roman Court he must set apart the manor of Amwell, Herts,[1] and secure the royal assent to its being assigned to the maintenance of the Convent Cellar; he must also establish the Long House in the cemetery[2] of Westminster for the support of the Sacrist's office.

At the same time the Prior and Convent accepted, after grave deliberation, a rule that the "exennia" given to the Abbot by the Obedientaries at any of the ten principal feasts that he might spend at Westminster should be limited to four shillings each; but at his blood-letting he should be satisfied with twelve pence. After arranging that the manor of Combe in Greenwich should be assigned to the Kitchener to maintain Abbot Ware's anniversary, which was to be celebrated in five copes, and giving various directions about the Abbot's tithes and his receipt of 10 marks from the manor of Oakham, and about the Prior's double portion, and about the blood-letting of the monks, they went on to decree that this composition should be transcribed into the book called the *Martyrology* and be read yearly to the brethren in Chapter assembled, on the first day that was not a Feast-day after the Feast of the Epiphany.

The record of this agreement is dated "in Capitulo in crastino Circumcisionis," 2 January, 1284, the third day after Wenlok's accession. If he was present, it must have seemed as if the Convent were letting him know forthwith and without all doubt what they expected of him. So long as he was only Abbot-Elect, the power lay in the hands of the Prior and Convent. The pity is that he

[1] The record of this in Wenlok's case is given in *Mun.* 4241, 21 Dec., 1288.

[2] Cf. *Mun.* 24497, dated 1290. The erection is described, p. 81.

chose in due course to violate some of the provisions, to the great and lasting disturbance of the peace of the House.

Now this long account of a complicated administrative system is worth while in itself because it enables us to realise the different departments of the conventual economy. We see the various "Obediences" in possession of their respective endowments, responsible for the charge of their respective duties, and liable to render annually an account of their stewardship. We see that the Abbot himself is in effect an Obedientiary; that is to say, he is endowed with certain manors, and has certain public duties to perform out of the proceeds. It is true that he was not obliged to submit his annual account-rolls to the Chapter; which, from the historian's point of view, is a pity, for we have very few compoti of the Abbatial estates, where we have hundreds of the estates of the Convent. But if he failed to fulfil his compact in any particular, he threw the whole system out of gear, and we must find in this fact the reason why Reginald de Hadham and Ralph de Mordon were deputed by the brethren to appear at the Bishop of London's residence in August, 1295, and to protest that it was not their business, though it might be their pleasure, to make payments to Cardinals or Nuncios.

CHAPTER IX.

THE BURGLARY.

During the war it was a common experience about 2.30 in the afternoon to find the East Cloister thronged with men of the over-seas contingents, who stood outside the door of the Pyx Chapel while a volunteer guide told them the story of a great burglary of royal treasure, and explained how the door had been covered with the skin of some delinquent, as a warning to all future burglars that kings will not lightly have damage in that sort. As the event in question belongs to the closing years of Abbot Wenlok's reign and has been recently described, to the delight of all who love the Abbey, by Professor Tout,[1] it is necessary to deal with it here. But our object is somewhat different from his; for he uses his opportunity in order to make the crime in question a text for an informing discourse on State administration under Edward I, whereas our business is with the Abbot and his brethren, who were certainly accused of complicity in the crime. It remains to be seen whether they altogether deserve the verdict which the Professor pronounces upon them in these and many like words: "The abbey had gone to sleep". The Abbot "was an old man, whose hold on the monks was slight". Some of the Obedientiaries "were singularly incompetent or unscrupulous persons". "It followed naturally that many of the fifty monks became slack beyond ordinary standards of mediæval slackness."[2]

[1] T. F. Tout, *A Mediæval Burglary* (in *The Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*), 1915.

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 8, 9.

With the question of the Abbot's age we have dealt elsewhere; and our story has been written in vain if it leaves the impression either that he was himself a weak man or that under his rule a period of comfortable torpor had settled down upon the Abbey. To do him justice, he was not a man whose character and spirit conduced to the easy reposefulness of the society of which he was chief, and as his life drew to a premature close, even the natural slumbers of some of his fellow-monks must have tended to be more and more disturbed. Nor can we find reason to question either the competence or the honesty of his Obedientiaries as a class. It is true that our series of Obedientiary-rolls, as it survives to-day, is just beginning in Wenlok's closing years. The Infirmarer's compotus for 1297-98[1] is an elaborate and business-like document, evidently not the first of its kind, though the earliest that we now possess, and any student of the *personnel* of the House would admit that he is under obligations to its competence. The same may be claimed in defence of Henry de Wanetynge, who drew up (probably in conjunction with William de Watford)[2] the compotus of the Treasurers for 1297-98;[3] considerable parts of it are now illegible, but this does not imply any want of zeal or ability on the part of the responsible Obedientiary, who did his work as well as it was done for the year following the Burglary, 1303-4,[4] when the Treasurers, as we shall see, included certain payments made in connexion with the imprisonment of some of their brethren. This is not to say that the burglary is a myth; for something of the kind unquestionably happened. But the care of the estates and the fulfilment of official tasks went on as usual.

There remains the Professor's assertion about the excessive slackness of many of the monks, and it is to be regretted that we do not even know the names of about twenty out of the forty-eight or fifty of whom the House

[1] *Mun.* 19718.
[2] *Monks of Westminster*, pp. 62, 72.
[3] *Mun.* 19838.
[4] *Mun.* 19840.

consisted.[1] But certainly the reason why we have been able to recover the names of the majority is just that they were all of them taking some part in the normal activities of the Convent, visiting estates, paying tradesmen, undertaking responsible journeys to Rome, attending the General Chapters of the Order, journeying to Scotland or Carlisle to wait upon the King, or doing his Majesty's bidding as to the further adornment of St. Edward's Shrine.[2] None of this betokens slackness on their part. There was, indeed, a report bruited against the morals of one monk,[3] whom the Abbot and Convent defended, apparently with success, and the names of two or three others must be introduced into this chapter in circumstances which, to say the least, are suspicious. But any one who wants to accuse Wenlok's Convent of a general slackness at this period must reckon with the Domesday chartulary, which was mostly written out at infinite pains in his time, and which contains a record of hundreds of transactions—quit-claims, transfers of property, suits about tithes, and the like—transactions, which, for the one part, are in the name of the Abbot and Convent of Westminster during Wenlok's reign. At any given date quite a number of monks were either Obedientiaries-in-chief or held subordinate posts, and at this time there is no justification for accusing either these or the remainder of a failure in conventual duty.

Let us begin our story with State documents which cannot be impugned. The year was 1303; the centre of public administration was at York, where it had remained since 1298; the peace of Amiens had enabled Edward to concentrate on the war in Scotland; and at the moment his headquarters were in Linlithgow. From there on 6 June, 1303, he issued a mandate[4] to four Justices—Ralph de Sandwich, Constable of the Tower; Walter of

[1] Cf. p. 11. [2] Cf. *Monks of Westminster*, p. 64. [3] Cf. p. 30.
[4] Rymer, *Foedera*, I, ii. 956; Palgrave, *Kalendars and Inventories of the Exchequer*, I, 251 ff.

Gloucester; John de Banquelle, afterwards Baron of the Exchequer; and Roger de Suthcote[1]—in which it was stated that "our Treasury within the Abbey of Westminster" was reported to have been broken into by force of arms by certain malefactors and disturbers of the King's peace, who had taken and carried away a great part of the treasure therein contained, and had committed other heinous offences. Therefore these Justices were to set on foot a thorough investigation on oath as to who were the malefactors and who their accomplices, who harboured the rogues and into whose hands could any of the treasure be traced, what was the nature of the treasure thus stolen and its value, and what were the veritable circumstances of the case. The inquiry was to be conducted by juries in the City of London and in the counties of Middlesex and Surrey. The Justices were to arrest the parties pronounced guilty until further order therein, and any treasure found in their possession was to be placed in safe custody. As Walter of Gloucester could not take part, the remaining three Justices proceeded in the matter without him. In this way "an inquiry was commenced on a more extensive scale than probably was ever attempted in a criminal case during the Middle Ages".[2]

But the proceedings were expeditious as well as extensive, and they seem the more so when we allow for the remoteness of the King from London; indeed, it is by no means certain that a modern crime involving as much examination of witnesses would to-day reach the Old Bailey within an equal period. For on the Wednesday next after the Octave of St. John Baptist—that is, on 3 July, 1303—the three Justices met in the Bishop of London's house in the City of London, and juries representing fourteen of the City wards came before them and stated the results of their inquiries;[3] on the day following, ten more wards reported at Leadenhall; and on the same day the juries

[1] Cf. p. 90. [2] Hubert Hall, *Antiquities of the Exchequer*, 1891, p. 20.
[3] Palgrave, 253 ff.

of the Goldsmiths and of the Aldermen gave their verdict at Guildhall. These, of course, were drawn from a small area and could assemble readily; but on the Friday, 5 July, the juries of the county of Middlesex—men from Isleworth and Brentford being among them—brought their evidence to the King's Hall at Westminster, and next day the south-side tribunals for the Hundreds of Surrey—Brixton, Wimbledon, Walton, Kingston, and the like—brought theirs to Southwark. On Wednesday, 7 August, the Justices, sitting in the New Temple, had before them the juries from Westminster and Fleet Street.

Meanwhile the Justices had been conducting their own separate investigations. On Monday, 17 June, St. Botulph's Day, Ralph de Sandwich, in company with the Mayor of the City (J. le Blund), the City Coroner's clerk, and Simon de Paris, the Sheriff, examined William le Palmer, servant of John Shenche, the guardian of the King's Palace; and on Saturday, 6 July, the same witness expanded his evidence; while between these dates, on 20 June, the Keeper of the Wardrobe, John de Drokensford, afterwards Bishop of Bath and Wells, along with Ralph de Sandwich, Roger de Suthcote, the Mayor of the City, and the Prior of Westminster,[1] drew up the indenture tripartite of the jewels recovered or remaining still in the Treasury, the whole being safely stored by the Keeper in the Tower of London. It should be added that at the same period a number of persons were placed under arrest —ten described as monks of Westminster,[2] six servants of the Abbey Sacristy, six other men, and two women, who were lodged in the Tower, and various others, male and female, who were placed in Newgate gaol.

But at some date not specified between the event itself and the month of October an arrest was effected on a

[1] Palgrave, p. 270, printed the list as if R. de Suthcote was Prior of Westminster, and repeated the mistake in the index, p. 343. But R. de Suthcote was one of the Justices (p. 251, etc.), and the Prior of Westminster at this time was William de Huntyndon; cf. *Monks of Westminster*, pp. 55, 194.

[2] It is doubtful if one of them, John de Prestcote, was a monk.

much larger scale. For on 10 October the King issued from Kinloss a mandate[1] to five Justices—Roger le Brabazon, the chief Justice, William de Bereford, Roger de Hegham, Ralph de Sandwich and Walter de Gloucester—which set forth that the persons named in it had been indicted and imprisoned in the Tower in connexion with the robbery of the Treasury, and that, as they had avowed the indictment to be false and malicious, the judges were to investigate the matter and see that full and speedy justice was done to them. The list of prisoners, who, for all that the mandate states, may have been then still in durance vile, includes the Abbot and forty-eight monks and thirty-two laymen, headed by Gerin of St. Giles; it implies the imprisonment of the Abbot and the greater part of his Convent, and only a reference to the findings of the juries[2] reveals that the first ten monks on the list in the mandate are identical with those incriminated by the findings, for we may safely identify "Johannes de Salop" in the mandate with "Johannes de Shrouesbery" in the findings. But whether there was in the course of the summer a wholesale arrestment of the monks and their lay partners in crime, or not, the King followed up his earlier orders for an investigation by a mandate dated from Kinloss on 10 November that under the guidance of the five Justices already mentioned the Sheriffs and the local juries should get to work again, which they did on and after the Friday following the Feast of the Epiphany, 1304, sitting in the Tower of London.

Such is the outward progress of this famous cause. It is now necessary to give the substance of the story as it unfolds itself in the various and by no means unanimous statements of the juries, and in the strange and questionable confession of the man whom most of the juries decided to be the chief culprit.[3]

[1] Rymer, *Foed.*, II. 938. [2] E.g. Palgrave, i. 292.

[3] Richard de Podelicote's confession, in Norman-French, is in *Exchequer Accounts K.R.*, 332-8. There is an English rendering in Hubert Hall, *Antiquities of the Exchequer*, pp. 25-28.

We start with an effort to arrive at the actual date of the crime. Podelicote, of whom more presently, is, as usual, very precise. After long preparation, extending from eight days before Christmas, 1302, to the quinzaine of Easter (22 April), 1303, he found that his task of breaking-in was complete, and two days later, on Wednesday night, St. Mark's Eve, he entered the Treasury. On the other hand, the only date mentioned by the juries comes from the Aldermen of the City of London and is more vaguely expressed. Their worships, after affirming[1] that the Sacrist of the Abbey and two of his brethren were the ordainers and agents of the burglary, pass on to describe a disorderly scene which was enacted about the Feast of the Invention of the Cross (3 May). Three men and two women, they say, together with a soldier and four unknown ruffians, met at this time in a house within the precincts of the Fleet Prison, and, after carousing for two days till midnight, armed themselves and made their way to Westminster, returning with the dawn. Inasmuch as the burglarly took place, as they believe, at about this date, the Aldermen hold these persons under suspicion of participation in the deed. It is natural to prefer a date like 24 April to so dubious a note of time as this.

But if, because of the juries' uncertainty and our suspicion of Podelicote's veracity, we cannot fix the moment of the event within a margin of ten days, we are in still greater doubtfulness as to the responsible perpetrator of the crime. There is, however, a claimant for that position who must now be allowed to speak for himself. For Richard de Podelicote, or Pudlicote, or Pudlicott, has left his own account of the event and of what led up to it. He describes himself as a merchant "travelling" in wool, cheese and butter, whom business had taken to Flanders at a time when Edward I had left behind him many liabilities. The authorities in Brussels extracted from Podelicote a sum of £17 14s. for wool supplied to, or com-

[1] Palgrave, i. 260 f.

mandeered by, the King, and they put him in prison because of what the King owed in addition. But he made his escape and came to Westminster to sue the Crown at law for the recovery of his losses, and perhaps also for compensation in respect of the disturbance of his business. The suit, he says, was due to come on for hearing early in August, "in the thirty-first year".[1] As the judges (if the Court was in London) sat in the Palace of Westminster, Podelicote whiled away the tedium of his waiting hours by observing what went on in the Abbey Cloisters, to which, by day, he could get access either through what is now the Poets' Corner entrance leading from Old Palace Yard, or by the gate and pathway leading from New Palace Yard between the north side of the Abbey and St. Margaret's church. Such access required neither stealth nor cleverness; such coming and going was so frequent that the depositions of the juries[2] quite naturally point suspicion at William of the Palace for having prevented the neighbours from coming to draw water, as usual, and state that one Gilbert le Wayte was in Newgate for having acted as look-out man—*custos vigilie*—during the preparations for the burglary. Thus, having the run of the Cloisters by day, he fell to watching the Refectorer's servants as they carried the baskets of silver plate—dishes, goblets, salt-cellars, and the like—out of the Frater after meals; such valuables are frequently referred to in our records, and the possession of them must be kept in mind when it is suggested that the Convent was engaged in an attempt to rob the King. Podelicote's impression on seeing these monastic treasures was that to acquire some of them would be a remedy for his own financial woes. The King was leaving Westminster that very day, and at night the Palace would be quiet. A convenient ladder stood against a house which was being roofed at the Palace-gate, and this enabled him to enter a window of the Chapter House. Thence, if all

[1] This would be August, 1303—three months *after* the crime.

[2] Palgrave, i. 282, 269.

was well, he could reach the Cloister. The door of the Refectory was close-locked, but the lock yielded to his knife, and the monks were soon the poorer to the extent of six hampers of plate, thirty silver dishes and a number of goblets. He sold as much as he could of his haul (there seems to have been no outcry or even gossip when the monks were thus robbed), and by Christmas, 1302, he had squandered the entire proceeds.

Then, he says, he began to think that within the Abbey there was another and much greater store of wealth, the King's Treasury. It was evidently much more difficult to come at than the Monk's Frater, which had yielded to the enterprise of a few minutes with a knife. But Podelicote knew the Abbey by this time and the whereabouts of the Treasury; he knew (what was apparently not common knowledge) "how he might come at it"; he knew that it meant both plenty of time and stronger instruments of assault. So he provided "two tarriers (one large, the other small), and knives, and many other instruments of iron". He first went to the work on 17 December, 1302, and continued his task nightly, "whenever he could discern and see his point," until 22 April, 1303, as already stated. On the 24th he entered the Treasury at night, stayed there the whole of St. Mark's Day, arranging what he would take. On the night of the 26th he proceeded to remove his captures. To the gate which led from St. Margaret's churchyard into the Palace he carried, and concealed in the ground outside the gate, a number of pitchers containing cups and jewels and precious stones, pouches full of jewels and gold and silver plate, a great crucifix, an image of our Lady, dishes, saucers, spice-plates, crowns, rings, clasps, and girdles. He also carried to a ditch outside the Mews a pot and a cup of silver, of which we shall hear more presently. In fact, he carried right away all that he possibly could, and he was anxious to make it clear that he left nothing behind him within the gate that led from St. Margaret's churchyard.

Here, then, is one answer to those who ask, who was the criminal? Richard de Podelicote's reply is: "Alone I did it". He provided his own instruments, did his own burrowing, entered the Treasury by himself, carried on the actual robbery by himself, and all with the object of recouping his own losses and from a sense that accomplices would mean a dividing of the spoil. Altogether it is a straightforward story, which merely lacks any probability. For, whichever of the possible strong-rooms is accepted as the Treasury in question, it is quite inconceivable that his crow-bar could have been at work night after night or even at irregular intervals during a period of seventeen weeks, unless every one in the Abbey and the Palace had agreed to be his accomplices and shut their ears. London is noisier by night now than it was then, but even to-day any such delving would be promptly observed. If an attempt on the Chapter House Crypt is in question—and the length of his task makes this not improbable—any patient in the Infirmary must have had his uneasy repose disturbed by the operations. If the Treasury was in the Chapel of the Pyx, then he was hammering away underneath the Great Dortor of the Convent, from which the brethren issued in the middle of the night for matins; and they would not be apt to take lightly the ruin of such sleep as they were allowed. Clearly it is not enough that he should have been in league with a section of the monks, for they and he must have been at the mercy of the rest.

But, as some such outrage unquestionably took place, and the time of it can be fixed within certain limits, let us see what can be said about the place in which the King's valuables were stored within the Abbey, while he was busy far away with Scottish warfare. Hitherto there have been two claimants. One is the Chapel of the Pyx in the East Cloister, which has remained so long a receptacle of secular stores of various kinds that to this day the Dean and Chapter have no control over it, but it is in the guardianship of His Majesty's Office of Works. The

champion of this site is the Dean of Wells from whom no one would lightly disagree on any point of Abbey history. The other claimant is the crypt beneath the Chapter House, over which the Abbey has long maintained its control, but which may well have been borrowed by Edward I as a Treasury, especially as the only entrance to it was, and is, down a short staircase leading out of the south transept hard by the Poets' Corner door. The latest, but not the only, champion of this site is Professor Tout, who brings to bear on the question his unique knowledge of public administration under the Edwards.

So it requires some hardihood to suggest a third possibility, even though Professor Tout admits that there might be more than one Treasury of the Wardrobe. But I have found a reference to the burglary which seems worth consideration. We shall have to deal at length presently with the dismal story of the quarrel between Wenlok and Prior Hadham, as it is unfolded to us in the notarial record of the case. My reference[1] deals with what happened on 1 September, 1307, when the Abbot brought twelve several accusations against the Prior, the last but one of which runs in these words:—

"Item de eo quod Abbatem tuum super Roberia et Fractura Camere Prioris ad scaccarium domini Regis falso et maliciose fecisti euocari ipsum nequiter diffamando et sic sentencian maioris excommunicacionis incurrendo super que est publica vox et fama".

Now, unless we are to assume that there was some further burglary and pillage of the King's Treasury, of which we know nothing as yet, the reference here must clearly be to the crime of 1303; otherwise we must suppose that it altogether passes over the more notable event and harks back to some lesser—say, to the attempted burglary of "the same Treasury" on the Cloister side,[2] which

[1] *Mun.* 9496 (3rd membrane).

[2] Palgrave, I, 288 f.; meme cele *Tresorie* . . . dans leur Cloistre nomement desouz le eus de mesme la *Tresorie* enver la Cloistre.

after all was only an attempt, and was hushed up because the Abbot interceded with the King; obviously this latter was not a case in which Wenlok could complain that Hadham had been the means of having his lord brought before the Exchequer. I cannot understand how the Abbot could be addressing himself to any but the one notorious event, still fresh in all memories, and in the absence of any specific mention of any other building—for the identification of the scene with the Chapter House Crypt and the Pyx Chapel is guess-work in either case, there being no topographical data, except "The King's Treasury,"—I shall proceed on the assumption that Wenlok was referring to the burglary of 1303, and that the King's Treasury was at any rate for the time being in the Prior's "camera".

But then—where was the Prior's chamber at the time with which we are dealing? So far, I have not myself found any reference to the Prior's chamber in the Abbey documents, nor, it appears, has the Dean of Wells, who comes up against the question of the position of the Prior's lodgings in his wonderful study of the Deanery,[1] though he is there dealing with things as they were at the Dissolution. At that time, as the Inventory[2] reveals, the Prior had what seems at first sight a considerable establishment consisting of kitchen, buttery, hall, parlour, chapel, first chamber and second chamber. Stated in this way, such a residence might be hard to locate in either the Dark Cloister or in Little Cloisters. But when the details of the Inventory are examined, they do not involve any considerable cubic content for the various apartments. The hall had hangings of old green silk, two cushions, a standing cupboard, two tables, a pair of trestles, two forms and a hanging lamp. In his parlour the Prior found room for two cupboards, a table with two trestles, two forms, two

[1] J. Armitage Robinson, *The Abbot's House at Westminster*, 1911, pp. 50 ff.

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 41 ff.; Public Record Office, Land Revenue, Miscellaneous Books, vol. 110.

chairs, and nine "joynyd stollis". The chapel may have been but a small closet, for Dalianns,[1] the Dissolution Prior, speaks of its "lytle Crucifixe," and "lytle Empty Chest" as the chief items of its furniture, apart from "iij Vestmentis". In fact, the whole of Dalianns' property and accommodation at the Dissolution is not larger than we should expect the Prior to have at much earlier times. We can compare it, for instance, with an account, which I have described elsewhere,[2] of the rooms and goods of Brother Richard of Exeter, who had a *camera* (doubtless in Little Cloisters) where he died in 1397.[3] His set of rooms consisted of hall, buttery, bedroom, kitchen, and study, and if a simple monk was so housed, the Prior might easily have the accommodation described in the case of Dalianns. Moreover, as the *camerae* of three or four privileged monks were evidently in the south walk of Little Cloisters, it is not at all unlikely that the Prior's *camera* was on the north side, where there were apparently only two doors, and where that to which these doors gave access would thus be more extensive. Certainly it would have been easier for a burglar of the Podelicote type to dig his way in from the cemetery to a tenement on the north side of Little Cloisters; but this is more than we have warrant for assuming, though Walcott located the Prior's chamber on the north-east side.[4] In our *Customary*,[5] however, we have a reference, dating from about forty years before the burglary, which brings us back from Little Cloisters to the near neighbourhood of the Pyx Chapel. The words are: "in longam cameram, quae iuxta refectorium est sita, ubi nunc est camera prioris"; and we remember that Podelicote was tempted by the ease with which the Refectory could be robbed to make trial of

[1] *Monks of Westminster*, p. 183.
[2] In my *William de Colchester*, pp. 49 ff.
[3] *Mun.* 6603; *Monks of Westminster*, p. 101.
[4] I.e., the situation of what is now No. 2 Little Cloisters.
[5] Ed., H.B.S. II, 112.

greater booty of which he knew near by. We can hardly be wrong, then, in believing that the Prior's chamber which Walter de Wenlok and his brethren were accused of rifling, when it was in the King's use as a treasure-house, was not many yards distant from the south-east angle of the Great Cloister; and, if we care to disregard the inventiveness of Podelicote, we may accept the statement that the situation was accessible to an excavator from the cemetery.

Now, I do not propose to follow the fortunes of all the various secular criminals who shared the miserable fate of Podelicote because of their complicity in this enterprise. My business is with Walter de Wenlok and his fellows. Nevertheless, our documents abound in references to some of the lay villains and to other laymen who are mentioned in the depositions as edited by Palgrave. Take, for instance, Gerinus de Sancto Egidio, or Gerin of St. Giles's, sometimes described as the "Lyndraper".[1] There was strong suspicion of his complicity with the monks in the capture of the booty. According to the Westminster and Fleet Street tribunal[2] he carried away from the Abbey a basket containing precious things valued at £200, removing them first to his house near St. Giles's Hospital, and afterwards to a place variously described as "Haggeheg," "Haggegh in Kentissheton,"[3] and "Hackehet,"[4] and no doubt further specified as "in campis Sancti Pancraci";[5] there it was found by a shepherd boy, whose report of the fact was followed by his dismissal by his master; which also brought the master under suspicion. It was stated in evidence that in this matter Gerin was in league with Brother Alexander de Neuport[6] and Brother Thomas de Dene.[7] Anyhow Gerin was arrested and taken to the Tower.[8]

Now there is no question at all that this Gerin was in the confidence of Walter de Wenlok and of the House at large. Their first dealings with him of which I know were

[1] Palgrave, I, 292. [2] *Ibid.*, 266 f. [3] p. 262. [4] p. 279.
[5] p. 292. [6] p. 286. [7] p. 281. [8] p. 269.

concerned with his tenancy of a tenement in the vill of Hampstead, formerly held by one Gilbert de Kanep. Gerin received a fourteen years' lease of this property at a rent of ten shillings yearly as from Michaelmas, 1286,[1] and it is worth noting that a journey from his home near the Hospital of St. Giles to this country house at Hampstead would lead him through the "fields of St. Pancras," where he dropped his precious basket. Evidently the Convent were satisfied with his probity, for they sent him to hold courts on their manors; e.g. "in expensis Gerini . . . pro j curia tenta [at Aldenham] ijs" (1294-95) [2] "in expensis Gerini de Sancto Egidio per v dies propter assisam de Kelleueden iijs v.d." (1299-1300) [3]; "in expensis Gerini tenentis vnam curiam [at Battersea] xiijd" (1300) [4]; "Gerino clerico precepto fratris R. de Waltham ij q^r" [at Ashford, 1295-96].[5] He was also employed by the Abbot himself: "in expensis Gerini de Sancto Egidio apud Colecestr' et fferinge pro negociis domini faciendis uersus vicecomitem de Essex in vigilia Sancti Matthei Apostoli xx^d," [6] (1297-98). In fact, he was a regular retainer of the Abbey, as is seen from the accounts of the Treasurers of 1303,[7] who paid him his fee of fifteen shillings for three quarters as naturally as they paid twenty shillings to Henry Spigurnel, the King's Justice, for the whole year, or as the Treasurers of 1297-98 [8] had handed to Gerin the same amount "pro roba sua per preceptum Ballivi". Indeed, the confidence of the Convent in him caused them to send him much further afield; first, as the same compotus shows, to Rome in 1297-98 in company with the Convent Bailiff [9]; then in two successive years (1301, 1302) to Scotland along with Brother Roger de Bures at a cost of £10,[10] no doubt on a mission to the

[1] Domesday, f. 119*b*. [2] *Mun.* 26038. [3] *Mun.* 25601.
[4] *Mun.* 27505. [5] *Mun.* 26682. [6] *Mun.* 25599.
[7] *Mun.* 19839. [8] *Mun.* 19838.
[9] "In prebendis equorum Balliui et Gerini post recessum eiusdem versus curiam Romanam."
[10] *Mun.* 23631 f.

King; and finally in 1303 the Treasurers[1] paid £4 17s. to Brother Robert of Reading, the chronicler, and to Gerin for their journey together to York "pro redditibus de Wiche".

In the *Monks of Westminster*,[2] I identified this place with Wick, near Pershore. A closer knowledge of the county reveals to me the badness of the blunder, which, moreover, I should not have made, had I paid more attention to "Domesday". For there, in a group of documents[3] headed "Wyche," we have first of all a grant from Walter de Wenlok and the Convent of "their saltworks of the Wiche" to Robert the "Prepositus of Wyche," with the proviso that the Convent's houses on the demesne shall be so kept as to secure accommodation for the Abbot and his men whenever a visit is paid to the estate. Then there is a document which shows that Edward I was induced to interfere in order to secure to Wenlok and the Convent their annual due from this manor. By way of getting at the just rights of the case the King has consulted his Treasurer and the Barons of the Exchequer, who report to him as follows: The Abbot and Convent of Westminster by charters from former Kings should receive each year the tenth of the farm of the King's vill of Wyche, that is, from that part of it which belongs to the King and was assigned by him to his late mother Queen Alianore; but in fact, as the Barons find by a scrutiny of their rolls which they have with them at York, the Convent has from time to time been paid considerable sums in respect of arrears of rent from Wyche and there is a writ of the thirteenth year of King Henry III in which their due is specified as £8 yearly. Therefore in a third entry we find a brief of Edward I to "his men at Wiche" that the £8 must be paid to the Abbot and Convent for the present year and so from year to year hereafter. We have Brother William de Chalk's receipt for £16 for the years 1303 and 1304.[4]

[1] *Mun.* 19838. [2] p. 70. [3] f. 295*b*, 296. [4] *Mun.* 29179.

Now, the reference to the salt-works shows that we are dealing, not with Wick, near Pershore, but with Droitwich. It may be that the various Worcestershire Wicks formerly displayed some saline activity, but Droitwich became by royal favour of the Confessor and his successors *the* Wyche, and "the additional name of Droit was seldom, if ever, used so early as the reign of Edward III".[1] The distinction between Wick and Droitwich is further marked in the Abbey documents (and no doubt generally) by the fact that the latter is never spelt with "k" but always with "h," and we can add this much to the evidence of the *Victoria County History*,[2] that the names Wich, Wyche, Wiche, and Wyz are normal for Droitwich in Century XIII, and in the early part of Century XIV.

We are thus able to put a date to the brief of Edward I just referred to, and we can connect it, strangely enough, with the Burglary, for both belong to 1303 and the question of the salt-rents exercised the minds of our monks at the same time and with the same zest as the excitement about those members of the House who were implicated in the crime. Gerin of St. Giles's was deeply involved in both matters. We may assume that his journey in company with Robert of Reading occurred in the early part of 1303, for he would hardly be an acceptable envoy to the Court after being so seriously implicated in an attempt to pilfer its property. We have details of many journeys in connexion with those payments, but his name is nowhere else mentioned. One roll[3] gives the costs of no fewer than six journeys to York and back. The head of it is imperfect and the date is lacking; the other sections give dates as follows: St. Barnabas, St. John Baptist, St. Bartholomew, St. Michael. In the Bartlemas journey there is just a reference to payments about a letter of the Queen "pro Redditibus de Wich," and in the last we suddenly come upon mention of the thirty-first year, which is 1303; but the roll

[1] T. Nash, *Hist. of Worcs.*, 1781, I, 295.
[2] *Worcestershire*, iii. 72. [3] *Mun.* 9251.

does not name the travellers, and refers to no Westminster person except "dominus," i.e. the Abbot. We can only gather from details in the expenditure that Wenlok and the monks were sparing no effort to retain their £8 of annual revenue from the salt-works, and we are in no doubt as to the reason. The rent was an ancient appanage of the House. A quarter of a century later, when Edward III issued his mandate [1] to the Treasurer and the Barons of the Exchequer for the payment to be continued, his Majesty referred to a charter of the Conqueror who is made to say: "Donaui insuper decimam de Wyche de eadem parte que ad me pertinebat et iterum reddidi eandem partem eis [i.e. the Abbot and Convent] iniuste ablatam quam Rex Edwardus antea dederat". Any revenue that had its roots in the Confessor's bounty was worth a struggle. So the roll of the Midsummer journey, to take a single instance, includes the following: on the day after their arrival in York, which happened on a Friday, a salmon for the Treasurer (6s. 8d.); on the Tuesday, a present for the Chancellor (4s.); on the Wednesday, a salmon for R. le Brabazon, Chief Justice (5s.); on the Saturday, a present (3s. 10d.) to John de Drokensford; on the Sunday, the Abbot dined with the Treasurer; on the next Tuesday, two Clerks of the Chancery and on the Thursday the Doorkeeper of the Exchequer dined with monks; on the Sunday following, the necessary letters were obtained after a payment of 10s. to le Brabazon's clerks.

But this particular journey alone cost £9 8s. and it thus becomes obvious that it would take several years' rent from the salt-mines to recoup the monks for their initial outlay. So we pass to the document which brings the question of the Droitwich rent and the question of the Westminster Burglary into close connexion. It is a compotus [2] prepared by Brother William de Chalk,[3] an active monk, much associated with Abbot Wenlok, and

[1] *Mun.* 22968; 13 Mar., 1327.

[2] *Mun.* 27702.

[3] Cf. *Monks of Westminster*, p. 66.

therefore with Alexander de Persore in Wenlok's affairs. He had been a member of the Convent for rather over ten years when in 1303, with which we are concerned, he was entrusted with the task of raising money to meet all this expenditure. To this end the Convent resolved to dispose of a wood on its estate at La Knolle, or Knowle, in Warwickshire, which came to it in 1292 by royal bounty among what were known as Queen Alianore's Manors.[1] The timber realised the large sum of £91, and Chalk tells us how he laid this out. The principal item is one of £45 2s. of which no details are given, but which, taken in gross, paid for a journey to Scotland along with Brother Alexander de Neuport [2] and for six journeys to York "pro liberacione fratrum nostrorum" and "pro redditibus de Wyz"; so that we are no doubt justified in saying that William de Chalk is the traveller whose journeys are described in the anonymous *Mun.* 9251. Elsewhere [3] he includes a payment of 30s. for a horse provided for Alexander de Neuport when he rode to Scotland to see the King "pro fratribus nostris incarceratis". He also enters a sum of £2 13s. 4d. as given at various times to the imprisoned brethren, and 2s. as paid to those who conveyed the money to the Tower. Beyond these, there is a curious gift of 20s. to H. Spigurnel, the King's Justice, who attended at the Tower in order to prove an alibi for Brother Chalk; for the latter was anxious to have it clear that on a certain day, 25 June, 1303, he was at Canterbury; and the date shows us that herein he was not avoiding a charge of complicity in the burglary, which happened two months before.

Nevertheless, both he and Alexander de Neuport, his companion in these frequent travels, were gravely suspected by some of the juries, though not by all. The Westminster and Fleet Street tribunal,[4] for instance, stated

[1] *Monks of Westminster*, p. 15.

[2] Comparison with *Mun.* 23638 shows that this journey was in 1302-3.

[3] *Mun.* 23634.

[4] Palgrave, i. 266.

that soon after the Feast of the Invention of the Holy Cross (3 May), the Abbey Sacrist, Adam de Warfeld, whom most of the juries found guilty, reported to four of his brethren, Reymund de Wenlok, Alexander de Neuport, John de Wenlok, and William de Chalk, that he had found a silver-gilt cup and pitcher, and how it had happened. They, knowing nothing about the burglary, advised him to consult John de Foxle. So the Sacrist and Richard de Burgo, the Abbot's Bailiff,[1] went off to Berkshire to find John de Foxle in his country-house at Bray[2]; who, having likewise no knowledge of the crime, counselled them to approach the Abbot and through him claim the right to treasure-trove within the precincts. Probably Foxle's advice was acted upon, for another Jury[3] reported that Alexander de Neuport and William de Chalk proceeded to Pershore, where the Abbot was residing; they offered him, say this Jury, a gift of two silver cups and two silver flagons, which he refused on the ground that he did not know[4] how they had come by them; but the incident is clearly capable of a more innocent interpretation.

Meanwhile the Convent, as a whole, continued to record in its official documents the help it was giving to the brethren who were imprisoned for the crime. Their number is not stated except in the depositions.[5] We may assume that Adam de Warfeld, the Sacrist, was one, and we know that Roger de Bures was another; for the Treasurers of 29 September, 1303—24 June, 1304[6] refer to a payment made to the latter "ante incarceracionem suam"; and their successors of 1304-5[7] handed £2 to Roger's brother, Robert de Bures, in order that he might

[1] Apparently he was William de Chalk's brother-in-law. Palgrave, I, p. 291.

[2] Cf. p. 87.

[3] Palgrave, p. 290.

[4] I have not found any reference in the muniments to his movements during the spring and summer of 1303.

[5] Palgrave, I, 269, gives ten names.

[6] *Mun.* 19840.

[7] *Mun.* 19841.

redeem two pieces of plate, which Roger had pledged before his imprisonment for the purpose of defraying his expenses at the Archbishop's visitation. In fact, the Convent clearly regarded the prisoners as persons deserving of help in a quite open way. For example, the provost of the manor of Knightsbridge notes in his list of stock[1] that two sheep had been given by the Abbot's orders "in exhennio facto fratribus commorantibus apud Turrim London". The Treasurers of 1303-4 tell us that by decree of the Chapter they gave £2 to the brethren in the Tower; and that it cost 1s. 10d. to send a letter to the Sheriff of Surrey with a view to investigations that would lead to a release. The Treasurers of 1304-5 record a payment of £5 to the vicar of Battersea in respect of money which he had lent for the same purpose, and one of 6s. 8d. to Brother Walter de Arkesdene who had found means to hand a "curialitas" or *douceur* to some one in the Tower in order that the monks might be loosed from their fetters. Evidently this last concession was a prelude to the complete enlargement of the prisoners; for in the same compotus there is payment for the entertainment of the Justices for one day "pro deliberacione fratrum".

It is a strange story, altogether, and the depositions of the juries are far from convincing. Most of the stolen property seems to have been recovered, and certainly the monks were not enriched by the burglary either individually or as a body. Those who look at the life of the House as a whole during this period would not be surprised if the inculpation of these monks, who were chiefly Wenlok's special supporters, was due less to their actual guilt than to the hostility of Reginald de Hadham, whose name was not mentioned in the course of the investigation, though he appears along with the rest of his brethren among the persons officially recorded[2] as having been sent to the Tower.

[1] *Mun.* 16392.

[2] Rymer, *Foed.* II, 938, col. 2.

CHAPTER X.

THE GREAT CASE OF HADHAM v. WENLOK.

THE reader has been prepared by various hints for a recognition of the fact that our Abbot was a ruler who made himself felt as such. He had a soft side to his character, as he showed by his care for his mother and other relations; he was one who made much of his position in English life and liked to be generous in his gifts to friends in high places; his care for the abbatial estates was constant and personal; he moved continually from manor to manor, always with a watchful eye fixed on the economic development of each; and though thus often absent from the Abbey, he was keenly alive to all its concerns. But in his relations with a portion of his brethren he was unfortunate, and it cannot be denied that his closing years were marked by a quarrel which split the House from top to bottom, and which arose out of those very financial and economic arrangements in which he was expert; how expert and how watchful, may be guessed by any one who tries to find account-rolls and other financial information dating from the days of his unworthy and incompetent successor, Richard de Kedyngton, called also de Sudbury.

The circumstances that led up to the quarrel are soon stated. The main cause, a disagreement about the compositions, has already been referred to. We must go back to 1305. On 4 April,[1] the feast of St. Ambrose, the priorship fell vacant by the death at the age of 65 of Brother William de Huntyndon, who had held office since 1298.

[1] This date has been found embedded in *Mun.* 9496, since the issue of *Monks of Westminster* (p. 55).

It is to be carefully noted that the Convent remained without a Prior till 2 August[1]—an interval large enough to suggest some difficulty in bringing the brethren to unanimity. No doubt there were rivalries afoot, and I hazard a suggestion that the choice lay between Alexander de Persore and Reginald de Hadham. Alexander would without question be the Abbot's candidate; he was also, it appears, Sub-Prior,[2] with such claims to succeed as that position might imply. But he lay under dark suspicion in respect of the robbery of the Treasury in 1303, and, though he was perhaps slightly the senior of the two,[3] and had served the Convent, like Hadham, in the important offices of Almoner and Sacrist, yet the thought of what the folk in the Palace might think of the election of a suspected burglar to the priorship may easily have turned the scale against him.

Indeed, I have come upon a document[4] which, though it is undated, belongs clearly, as I think, to this early phase of the struggle and bears witness to the strong feelings which were aroused. It refers first to the vacancy in the priorship through the death of William de Huntyndon, and is our authority for the statement that he had been elected by compromission.[5] It passes on to the compositions by which the goods of the Abbot of Westminster were separate and distinct from those of the Prior and Convent and to the right of the monks, on the death or demission of a Prior, to elect a successor according to the forms of election which were so long established that the memory of man ran not to the contrary. But there was every reason to believe, it says, that Walter the Abbot had wilfully turned aside or intended to turn aside from those forms by setting at nought the custom hitherto in use;

[1] The date is so given in *Flores Historiarum*, iii. 129; but it is established by *Mun.* 9496.

[2] Palgrave, *Kal. and Invent.* I, 262 (1303); *Mun.* 24412 (1305-6).

[3] We can trace A. de Persore back to 1284, and R. de Hadham to 1286.

[4] *Mun.* 9508 A (see p. 202). [5] Cf. *Monks of Westminster*, p. 55.

that he was minded of his own authority and mere motion to intrude and install into the Priorship some criminous or convicted person of ill fame—this might express the attitude of the opposition towards Alexander de Persore—and that he would proceed to suspend, excommunicate, and deprive those monks who resisted his will. At last in the middle of the document we come upon the name and the action of the man who was, I believe, the prime mover in all this trouble, the stoutest champion of the opposition to Wenlok. He is Brother Roger de Aldenham. We first make his acquaintance as a patient in the Infirmary during 1297-98, and our knowledge of him only covers a dozen years or so; but he was a fighter for most of the time. What his standing is when he makes his appearance in the sick-room, we cannot tell; but as he became Convent Treasurer in 1302,[1] and sub-collector of Papal tenths in the following year, he was probably by that time a man with proportionate experience behind him. At any rate here he is, the head of a party opposed to Wenlok's plans, and our document is his formal announcement, on behalf of himself "et omnibus michi adherentibus," that in defence of their common state and in the cause of their right and custom he makes appeal to the Court of Canterbury, to the King as patron of the monastery, and to the guardians of the privileges of the Prior and Convent, and he commits himself and his friends to the protection and defence of the Apostolic See, protesting at the same time that he and they will endeavour to nullify the election of any such criminous person to the priorship and, if he should be intruded, will refuse to render him any obedience due to a Prior. There is an "R" at the end which we may take to be Roger's initial, but in default of date and testing we may question whether the instrument was ever fully executed. It is merely of use to us as a description of the situation in which our House found itself at

[1] *Mun.* 26051.

some stage between the vacation of the priorship and the election.

Anyhow the unanimous[1] choice of the brethren fell at last on Reginald de Hadham, and on the morrow of St. Peter ad Vincula, 1305, he was installed in the seat of William de Huntyndon, deceased. It was stated on his behalf, in the course of the legal proceedings which must be described presently, that he made an excellent Prior, whether he was judged in respect of his behaviour at divine worship in the Choir, or of his capacity to preside over meetings of the Convent in Chapter assembled during the Abbot's absence, or of his conduct when he sat by the "skilla" in the Refectory,[2] and that this continued for the space of more than two years.

But this testimony, I take it, did not mean to imply that there was always a perfect understanding between the Abbot and the Prior. There are signs that the latter was apt to talk freely and even unguardedly in the Cloister,[3] and the old question of the compositions, and of the Abbot's strictness or otherwise in the observance of them, passed from the talk of the Cloister to the more formal recriminations of the Chapter House, when the Prior and his lordship occupied their privileged seats facing the entrance, and the brethren were ranged in due order round the wall. In the first pleadings which he put forward in the suit Reginald de Hadham referred eloquently to the importance of the then prevailing composition, or separation of property as between Abbot and Convent—how it had been ordained for the most obvious reasons by the illustrious King Henry III, their patron, with the advice of the chiefs and greatest men of the realm, and confirmed by the Supreme Pontiffs; how no small number of its articles had been rendered null

[1] "Electus fuit dictus R. vnanimi assensu et voluntate omnium fratrum . . . et per Walterum de Wenlok tunc Abbatem . . . canonice confirmatus et in possessionem dicti officii per eundem Abbatem inductus extitit et installatus." *Mun.* 9496.

[2] Cf. *Monks of Westminster*, p. 24, etc.

[3] Cf. *Mun.* 5460, *sub fin.*

and void by the Abbot of his own mere motion to the peril of his soul, to the grievous loss and injury of the portion allotted to the Prior and Convent, and to the pernicious leading astray of future Abbots; how Reginald and his predecessors[1] in the priorship and the senior monks of the House had humbly made frequent request to Walter de Wenlok to keep inviolate the various rules specified in the composition, lest he should incur the excommunication and anathema threatened by the Holy See in case of their infringement; and how, nevertheless, forgetful alike of his own salvation, of the honour and welfare of his Church and Convent, and of the corporal oath which he had frequently taken to obey these articles, the Abbot day by day inflicted on his community extortion, hardship, and wrong, till the whole condition of the Abbey Church in those times was brought to grievous confusion[2] and peril.

Thus, if the Prior threw into his spoken protests anything at all like the matter and the energy that mark his formal indictment, it is easy to realise that a strong-willed head of the House would come to regard him as an opponent to whom stern measures must be applied, if any vestige of authority were to be retained. The more so, as the Prior was by no means alone. In a matter that really affected the proprietary rights of the whole body apart from the Abbot, it was natural that de Hadham should find plenty of support, and it says something for the domination of Wenlok's character that only seventeen monks are stated in the depositions to have formed the Prior's party, or at least to have been prepared to establish his innocence. The Prior and these seventeen constituted almost a third part of the Convent, for an entry in the compotus of the Abbot's Treasurer for 1306-7 shows that the full number that year was fifty-five,[3] and we must

[1] These would be John de Coleworth and William de Huntyndon.

[2] "Proch dolor turbatur," *Mun.* 9496.

[3] "Item in O Abbatis (cf. *Monks of Westminster*, p. 94) solut' lv. fratribas lv. s." (*Mun.* 24257).

certainly add to the party the name of Roger de Aldenham who is mentioned in only one of the three lists which we possess.[1] The names, given, with one or two exceptions, in the order which corresponds with the time of their entry into the Convent, are as follows: Jordan de Wratting, Richard de Waltham, Robert de Sancto Martino or Marttin, Robert de Bures, Ralph de Mordon, Richard de Fanelore, Robert de Reding, the chronicler, John de London, sometimes called John Bever, Walter de Arkesdene, Henry de Bircheston, Gwydo de Asshewelle, John de Notele, William de Almali, William de Glastingberg, Thomas de Woburne, Robert de Blithe, and Richard de Coleworth. But though all these must thereby have incurred the Abbot's displeasure, and, indeed, two of them, Bircheston and Almali, were for some reason imprisoned in the Palace[2] for some period during 1307-8,[3] yet Reginald de Hadham was the chief object of his wrath. "Your attitude towards me," said the Prior to his lord, "was not that of a man consumed with a zeal for righteousness but rather of one animated by a kind of malice.[4] You eyed me with a look of hatred and loaded me with heinous accusations which were the figments of your own imaginings."[5]

We do not know at what time between the summer of 1305 and the spring of 1307 this woeful quarrel began, nor by what stages it became acute. But we have a series of documents which describes the legal steps by which it was brought to a decision. Quite suddenly, on 14 July, 1307, we find Reginald and his party—for he takes no step without his "commonachi sibi adherentes"—giving lawful authority to three Proctors to act in their interests at the

[1] *Mun.* 9496, 9499 B, 6679.

[2] This may have resulted from the judicial investigation ordered 14 July, 1308 (*Mun.* 12777; see p. 203).

[3] The Treasurers' roll of that year entered 4s. 8d. "pro catehenis fratrum H. de B. et W. A. incarceratorum in palacio domini Regis" (*Mun.* 19842).

[4] "Typo malicie."

[5] "Oculos inuidie mihi inicientes quedam crimina . . . conficta . . . mihi imposuistis.

Roman Court. The three were Magister John de Deneby, who now and for long afterwards earned the gratitude of the Abbot's opponents, Adam de Haliwelle, and Roger de Presthope, and the document[1] was tested by Gwydo de Asshewelle and Henry de Bircheston, two of Reginald's keenest henchmen among the monks, and by Roger de Presthope and another clerk. Evidently at this stage the controversy had not passed beyond the point at which each side was hopeful of a decision from the Holy See as to the observance of the compositions, and was taking steps to get that decision pronounced in its favour.

But another document[2] gives a hint that some effort was also being made to find a basis of agreement within the House. It is a sealed statement in the Abbot's name and it shows that his own supporters had been urging him to be reasonable. A disagreement has arisen, he says, between Brother Reginald and certain of our monks who are his accomplices, of the one part, and myself of the other part. This obviously is not very pacific language; the Prior, as we have seen, would speak of "commonachos sibi adhaerentes"; the Abbot prefers "quosdam suos complices". The matter of dissension, he goes on, is certain articles touching the compositions that have long prevailed between my predecessors and the Convent. "But in strict legality—'iuris rigore'—I cannot be bound by these." This again is hardly a hopeful method of accommodation, especially as he urges that he is protected by lawful prescription and other legal defences. Nevertheless, he has yielded, he says, to the prayers of those of his monks who are sons of obedience—we note the contrast between these "filios obediencie" and the Prior's "complices"—and therefore he renews, ratifies, and confirms the said compositions, and makes a promise for himself and his successors to observe them faithfully, except in so far as he gives notice by letters bearing the common seal, that he ought not to be bound by them for the time being. The

[1] *Mun.* 9499 E. [2] *Mun.* 5671 (see p. 204).

date of this document is 16 August, 1307, and it can hardly be argued that Wenlok has made a very obliging or satisfactory use of the opportunity to ensue peace. Indeed, we can almost watch by this means the hopeless development of the quarrel—in July the appointment of Proctors for the Prior's party, in August the vain endeavours of the Abbot's party, of which the only effect was to enlarge the cleavage by showing that the Abbot had no real respect for compositions which the Prior regarded as vital to the Convent's interests.

The next initiative was with the Abbot, and the steps that he took were drastic enough to quench any hopes of peace. He brought forward in Chapter on Friday, 1 September, a considerable array of accusations against de Hadham, and then fixed the morrow at prime as the time when the accused should purge himself "cum vicesima quarta manu". He must find twenty-four champions.

But the Abbot must needs state the grounds on which he took such grave action, and this he did by the mouth of his duly constituted Proctor, Master David de Northampton, under the following heads: (1) You, Reginald, were a consenting party to your election before it took place. (2) You were guilty of disobedience in refusing to produce your account-roll as Treasurer of the Convent,[1] though a full Chapter required you to do so. (3) You did not permit, indeed you expressly forbad, Brother Roger de Aldenham to obey the commands of the Abbot by going to Hurley,[2] and you favoured and supported him to the detriment of peace and order. (4) You executed the Prior's office in spite of the Abbot's inhibition on several occasions, presiding for two days in the Refectory, celebrating several times at the high altar, giving leave to the brethren and fulfilling various Prior's functions after the Abbot had suspended you. (5) In particular, you gave your licence, after being

[1] We do not know in what year he was Treasurer, and no compotus of his as such survives.

[2] I.e. the Priory of St. Mary at Hurley, Berks, a cell of Westminster.

suspended, to Brother Roger de Aldenham, who for the space of a month was away from the House. (6) You removed various things from different offices that you held before your election as Prior, to the great damage of the House, and in particular from the guest-house, and from the manors of Knightsbridge and Paddington, in spite of the Abbot's orders that such removal should never take place. (7) When you had charge of the Convent Garden,[1] you appropriated to yourself 100 marks, and more. (8) When you set out for the Roman Court, you handed to Brother Richard de Waltham a very large sum of money to be kept safely for you—money which, as some suspect, you had embezzled from your various offices. (9) In spite of the liberties and immunities of the Church of Westminster you made formal appeal to the Court of Canterbury, to the prejudice of the privileges that belong to the Apostolic See and our lord the King, thus incurring sentence of major excommunication. (10) You falsely and maliciously caused your Abbot to be haled before the King's Exchequer in the matter of the robbery and breaking-in of the Prior's chamber,[2] wickedly slandering him, and thus *ipso facto* incurring sentence of major excommunication. (11) Though you were bound by these sentences, you several times took part in divine service.

To each of these serious charges the Abbot appended a statement that they are not merely serious but notorious: "super quo est publica vox et fama," and we may admit that a Convent about which such reports were commonly current must long have ceased to be a home of ancient peace. But their interest for us is that, though apparently observing no order of time, the sequence enables us to trace the course of the stream of dissension between Wenlok and Hadham, between Wenlok's men and Hadham's men. To some of the matters we can easily assign

[1] We have a document (*Mun.* 5701) which describes Reginald de Hadham as "Custos Gardini Conuentus Westm. apud la Charring," in 1302.

[2] How far this sentence is a solution of the mystery as to the *locale* of the great burglary of 1303 has been discussed already (p. 156 f.).

dates, though we can do little more. For example, the contest for the Priorship can be timed, or at any rate the extreme limits of the period can be stated as 4 April and 2 August, 1305, but the statement that de Hadham connived at his own election would, in any case, be difficult alike of proof and of disproof, and we remember that similar accusations in our own day have given too long a life to acrimonious rumours. Again, we can say when Hadham was Warden of the Convent Garden, or rather we know that the Sunday after the feast of St. Aldhelm and of Urbanus, Pope and Martyr (25 May), 1302, fell within his tenure of the office, because we have a parchment[1] which constitutes a quit-claim on the part of one Robert de Bereweholte to the Abbot and the Convent and the Warden in respect of his administration of the Convent Garden at Charing, jointly with Reginald de Hadham, the Warden of the same; but as to the Warden having appropriated 100 marks and more of the revenues we can produce no evidence, for the "Gardinarius" has not left us his account-rolls; though it is open to any prejudiced observer to remark that, if the Warden was inclined to peculation, it is intelligible that he should have agreed to a severance of a joint administration; to which, however, there is the obvious answer that the Abbot and Convent would have resisted the severance, if they were not satisfied as to the "bona fides" of their representative in the management of an important piece of property. Again, there is the reference—most tantalising to our curiosity—to Reginald's part in a citation of the Abbot to appear before the Court of the Exchequer in connexion with the "Roberia et fractura[2] Camere Prioris"; with which we have dealt already. Reference is also made to de Hadham's journey to the Roman Court. We know of one such in

[1] *Mun.* 5701.

[2] "Fraccio," "burgaria," and "roberia" (especially the first) are the words chiefly used to describe the crime in the depositions (Palgrave, I, 251 ff).

1286, when he was nominated Proctor of the Abbot and Convent[1] for the promotion of certain affairs in the Curia; but he was too young at that time to have had much chance of embezzling the sums at which the Abbot hints. He made a second journey to Rome in 1298, the financial details of which are given to us in two long parchments.[2] These show that he was associated in this enterprise with Brother Alexander de Persore, who was the Abbot's chief henchman in the conventual quarrels, and that they were on the Continent together from 19 May to 20 July, when Reginald turned homeward. As far as we can gather, the journey was not concerned with any partisan interests. But it still might be the case that, before starting, Hadham had quite rightly lodged with Richard de Waltham certain sums of money representing the balance of his accounts, for we know that he was Bailiff of the Monastery from 1297 to 1300,[3] besides being Almoner from 1294 to 1305, and in the former case his receipts would be considerable. There is no sign of any further visit to Rome nearer the date of his deposition. It may be added that Richard de Waltham, whom he chose as the depositary of his funds, was not only one of the senior members of the Hadhamite party, full sixty years of age, but had also held the responsible office of Bailiff;[4] and that in 1298, the probable year of the journey to Rome now in question, he received £31 10s. from the sale of a wood on the Abbey's manor of Aldenham, being described in the document[5] which gives this information as "Custos fabrice ecclesie Westm." —an office which, like the Bailiffship, signified the confidence of the Convent that he was a man to whom sums of money could be safely entrusted.

The other charges which Wenlok brought against the Prior clearly belong to the actual period of the Priorship,

[1] *Mun.* 28821. [2] *Mun.* 9244, 9250.

[3] *Mun.* 25599, 25600, 25601. I have come upon these references since the *Monks of Westminster* was compiled.

[4] *Mun.* 26042, 25596. [5] *Mun.* 26047.

and do not therefore date from any time before August, 1305. There is, for instance, the complaint that whereas the Abbot—no doubt because he found the man difficult to manage—ordered Brother Roger de Aldenham to proceed, *en disponibilité*, to the Abbey's Berkshire cell of St. Mary at Hurley, the Prior not only urged his eager ally to remain at Westminster but actually forbad him to leave, which, indeed, it lay within the Prior's right to do. On the other hand, the charge that Brother Roger had been given a month's leave by the Prior after suspension from his Priorship showed, if it could be justified, that de Hadham had gone beyond his powers; it also implies that his first suspension from office must be dated back long enough to allow a month's absence on de Aldenham's part to take place before the date—2 September—when this unfortunate squabble came to a head. On the whole, then, though we may wish to know more of the details, it is wonderful thus to trace as many of the facts as we actually can.

But the Abbot having now stated his counts, the accused had the right to appeal against him to a higher authority. We have seen that Proctors for the Prior's party had been nominated in July, and now the right to appeal is repeated.[1] His protest referred to the fact that it was within the Abbot's knowledge that his appeal to the Apostolic See was pending, and that nevertheless the Abbot had set him a "purgation" at shorter notice and of a severer kind [2] than custom allowed. This put him in great fear of further injuries to himself and his adherents, —suspension, excommunication, sequestration, deprivation, interdiction are all mentioned with lawyer-like particularity. Therefore he put in his written appeal to the Holy See and submitted himself and his friends to the protection of Rome. Whereupon the Abbot repeated his decision that Hadham should purge himself in respect of the charges

[1] The margin of *Mun.* 9460 is here noted in another hand: "ijda prouocacio Prioris".

[2] "Vltra numerum de iure vel consuetudine approbata statutum."

brought against him, and the Prior affirmed his readiness to do so and to appear before any competent tribunal; he also applied for a copy of the heads or articles of the indictment; but the Abbot, while deciding that he might have such copy, declined to have it made for him, and fixed the hour of Nones for the purgation to take place. At that hour the Prior and seventeen brethren of the older and better sort, who had personal knowledge of the accused, together with a number of chaplains, presbyters, and other trustworthy persons, came forward, all of them ready to purge him without a dissentient voice. But the Abbot cared for none of these things. He proceeded straightway to pronounce definitive and final sentence. You, Brother Reginald, he said, being Prior of Westminster, have long been reported to us that you were guilty of various crimes and misdemeanours against the ecclesiastical liberties of Westminster and against the profession and discipline of our Rule. We have, in accordance with the demands of our office, inquired into these charges and urged you in virtue of your due obedience to make answer to them. You have flatly denied the first and have declared that the rest are false. So out of our sincere delight in the odour of your good name[1] we have adjudged you on this day to purge yourself "with the 24th hand". And now we pronounce that you have failed in your purgation, and we hold you guilty, and our definitive and final sentence is that you are deposed, deprived, and removed from your authority and office as Prior. We reserve to ourselves the infliction upon you of the canonical penalty according to the discipline of the Rule. We decide that a new Prior must be elected, and we forbid all and singular the brethren of this House to pay any obedience or deference to Reginald de Hadham, under pain of greater excommunication.

Even now the Prior had not exhausted his possibilities; for to his "secunda prouocacio" he added a "secunda

[1] "In odorem bone fame tue affectuose delectantes."

appellacio," going over the whole ground again, reciting his appeal to the Apostolic Curia, the Abbot's disregard of that appeal, his vain request for a transcript of the charges, the peremptory summons to him to purge himself, the Abbot's inhibition of his compurgators, and his orders that the brethren were to deprive the Prior of his customary maintenance and place him in durance vile. But the Abbot proceeded with his task none the less. He committed the person of Reginald de Hadham to a quaternion of guards in the presence of Master William de Maldone and Robert de Gravesende, notaries public, Dominus Alexander, a chaplain, William de Cherring, John de Cardoyl, Roger de Presthope, Warin the tailor, Arnald le fruter, Roger de Stowe, and other witnesses; and the whole process thus far was written out by Peter of St. James's, London, notary public.

The Prior having thus failed to secure a just consideration of his case, it fell to his supporters to try their hand, and we pass for a moment from *Mun.* 9460 to *Mun.* 9499 B, which is dated two days later, 4 September, 1307, and is set forth in legal style by their faithful notary, Master John de Deneby. It states that fourteen monks of Westminster were duly present, namely, the seventeen already recorded less Jordan de Wratting, Richard de Fanelore and Richard de Coleworth. They recited the due and canonical election of de Hadham "spiritus sancti gracia et unanimi consensu totius collegii nullo reluctante,"[1] his suspension in total disregard of the pleadings put forward by him, the Abbot's many faults,[2] his violation of the traditional compositions, his threats against Hadham and themselves, and his determination to force on an election to the Priorship. Their "prouocacio" does not add to our knowledge of the case. It merely goes to show that

[1] We must bear in mind this emphatic statement, though we may admit that there was probably another strong candidate. Cf. p. 168.

[2] "Conuinctus est Abbas ille crebribus viciis coram non paucis viris fidedignis."

the Prior's party were capable of taking a line of their own, apart from the formal proceedings in Chapter.

But stored up along with this there is another parchment[1] which reveals to us that the Hadhamites had already realised the need for assistance and sympathy from outside. Internal action was of doubtful result. They must appeal to a larger public, and first to that section which was spiritually their own kith and kin, the Benedictine community. This they could do most easily in Oxford, because there was the seat of learning for students from Benedictine houses all over the country, and because there also the General Chapters of the Order not infrequently held their meetings, the usual time being about the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross (14 Sept.) or St. Matthew's Day (21 Sept.). Unfortunately our knowledge of the exact sequence of these General Chapters leaves many gaps in the series. Reyner[2] has traced their continuance from 1216 to 1492, but he has to admit a long *lacuna* at the period during which we need help—from 1290, when Walter de Wenlok presided and when the business included the re-organisation of Gloucester College[3] for Benedictine students, to 1338, when the Chapters were being usually held at Northampton, and when our Abbot, Thomas de Henle, was a president. Our document locates the proceedings "apud Oxon. in domibus prioris et monachorum, ubi generale capitulum celebrari consueuerat". But it does more, for it enables us to say that in 1307, after the Feast of St. Matthew (which is the date of our document), the General Chapter was to be held at Oxford, and that Walter de Wenlok and the Abbot of Malmesbury were the Presidents of the year. The two statements may thus be taken to imply that at this time Oxford was the normal venue, which in after years was changed to the Monastery of St. Andrew at Northampton.

Thus Reginald de Hadham is putting in an appeal to a

[1] *Mun.* 9499 D.

[2] *De Antiq. Benedict.*, Tr. II, pp. 38 ff.

[3] *Ibid.*, App. II, pp. 54 ff.; cf. C. Butler, *Benedictine Monachism*, p. 241,

preliminary gathering, with a view to getting his case laid before the General Chapter. He drew it up at Westminster on 24 August (only eight days after Wenlok's undertaking to observe the compositions) and it was read in Oxford on 21 September. The Prior of Malmesbury was there, and the Precenter of Abingdon; and there were monks from Gloucester and Glastonbury and "Midilton" and St. Augustine's, Canterbury, as well as other regulars and students. The story which he told them does not vary from that which we have already heard. His supporters, he said, were among the older and wiser members of the House. He and they had had difficulties with the Abbot about the compositions; the Abbot had suspended him and had confined them to their cells. What they now feared arose out of the threats he had uttered in the hearing of citizens of London and other trustworthy persons that he would proceed to much more severe measures at the ensuing General Chapter, over which he was to preside. So de Hadham gave his brethren notice that he was appealing to the Papal Court, and his faithful Proctor, John de Deneby, made himself responsible for the form and the facts of the statement.

We return once more to the official record of the lawsuit[1] and find that the scene now changes to the Roman Curia. De Hadham has "asked for Apostles".[2] The Papal Court under Clement V. is at Poitiers and appeals can be more expeditiously heard and answered than when the Alps had to be surmounted. So on 21 October—about a month after the General Chapter—Clement issued an Apostolic Rescript to the Abbot of Colchester, to Robert de Ros, Canon of St. Paul's, and to the Dean of the Arches.

[1] *Mun.* 9496.

[2] Oughton, *Ordo Judiciorum*, 1738, *tit.* 289 a. "Si Apostoli non fuerint petiti, non valet Appellatio . . . Apostoli sunt *literae dimissoriae*, quae a *Judice a Quo*, ad *Illum ad quem* appellatum est (ut de Lite melius instrui poterit) *transmittuntur:* Dicebantur autem *Apostoli* ab ἀποστέλλω, mitto. Cf. H. Conset, *Practice of Ecclesiastical Courts*, 1700, p. 192.

Robert de Ros held the prebend of St. Pancras; he had been Archdeacon of London from 1283 to 1294[1]; and was subsequently himself Dean of the Arches. But at the moment the latter functionary was engaged on business in foreign parts; so that the other two proceeded to act without him.

The rescript stated the bare facts. Hadham, the claustral Prior of Westminster, has informed the Pope that, though he was canonically elected by the Convent and installed by the Abbot, and had held office for some time according to the recognised customs of the House, yet he had been deprived by the Abbot of his Priorship, which in that monastery was a freehold. Hadham had appealed, and in spite of the appeal the Abbot had excommunicated him, and had forbidden the brethren, under pain of similar punishment, to treat him any longer as Prior. The three Commissioners (or any two of them) were to cite the necessary persons and take such action as in their discretion they might approve.

The Pope's order closed the first stage of the proceedings, and there are two details that may fitly be inserted at this point. One is that in the compotus of the Abbot's Treasurer for 1306-7[2]—Brother Henry Payn — we are given some idea of the costs incurred by the great man in notarial records of the proceedings: "Item magistro J. de Spaldinge notario pro toto processu de priuacione Prioris xxxiij s. iiij d. Item cuidam clerico transcribenti instrumenta viij d. Item cuidam garcioni deferenti eadem magistro A. de Kirkeby x d." The other is contained in a document[3] executed at Poitiers, some three weeks after the issue of the Papal Rescript, and dated 12 November. It is in the name of John, Cardinal Presbyter of St. Marcellinus and St. Peter (sometimes called John the Monk[4]), then Papal Penitentiary, and is addressed to the

[1] Hennessey, *Repert.*, p. 6.

[2] *Mun.* 24257.

[3] *Mun.* 6679.

[4] Rymer, *Foedera*, II, i, 15.

Prior of Bermondsey. Evidently the Hadhamites were still in treaty with the Curia in its French home; for the document refers to a petition of Reginald de Hadham and sixteen of his fellow-monks, whose names are given. It is of interest to note that the list omits William de Glastingberg and Richard de Coleworth, while it includes Roger de Aldenham, whose adherence we have assumed, and also an important senior, Jordan de Wratting, then practically seventy years of age, with over half a century's knowledge of the Convent, who was at that time holding the important office of Warden of Queen Alianore's Manors.[1] Their present purpose was to clear their consciences, or at least to avert the penalties of excommunication. For St. Dunstan, as Bishop of London, and other men of eminence had conferred possessions upon the Church of Westminster, and the saint had also pronounced a sentence of excommunication upon all who should alienate those possessions. But here was an unfortunate body of monks who had been driven by the cajolery or the threats of their Abbot into becoming parties to such alienation. The Abbey had been robbed and they had put up a nervous resistance which now seemed to them tantamount to complicity. So they have made suit to the Holy See that they may receive the benefit of absolution and the favour of dispensation, and the Penitentiary by the Pope's direction lays it upon the Prior of Bermondsey to absolve and dispense them, when they have renounced these alienations and the part they took in them. Nevertheless, it was a pretty device for securing that the issue between them and the Abbot should be prejudged by the Pope, but Clement V saved the situation by the insertion of a cautious "si est ita" in the deed.

We may suppose that the Apostolic Rescript of 21 October reached England some time in the month of November, even if those who obtained it waited on at

[1] *Monks of Westminster*, p. 55; cf. *Mun.* 25412-20.

Poitiers to secure the mandate addressed to the Prior of Bermondsey. Within a few weeks (25 Dec.) the Abbot of Westminster passed away, and the election of a successor (especially in so quarrelsome a time) would add to the normal delays of the ecclesiastical judicature. So we come on to the month of March, 1308, before the case really begins, and from now onwards *Mun.* 9496 is legally precise as to the procedure. It shows us how, out of the three judges nominated by the Pope, one, the Dean of the Arches, was abroad, while the other two, the Abbot of Colchester and the Canon of St. Paul's, proceeded to put their responsibilities on others. The Abbot of Colchester dated his commission for this purpose at Colchester on 11 March, and Robert de Ros dated his in London on the 15th; and both appointed as their deputies and commissioners the Prior and the Sacrist of the Church of the Holy Trinity, London, who were to proceed in the cause either jointly or separately.

CHAPTER XI.

THE GREAT CASE OF HADHAM *v.* WENLOK (*Continued*).

THERE was one other preliminary formality before the commissaries could proceed. The Abbot of Colchester on 10 March and Robert de Ros on 19 March executed a mandate to the Archdeacon of Westminster,[1] or his substitute, and to the Dean of Christianity, Middlesex, calling upon them to cite all interested parties to appear and show cause why the judges should not proceed to restore Reginald de Hadham to his Priorship again, the citation to be made in the conventual church of Westminster and in the parochial church of St. Margaret near Westminster. In his letter certificatory the Dean of Christianity stated that he had obeyed their worships' behest, and he sealed it with the seal of his office on 21 March.

So the suit opened on Friday, 29 March, being the fourth law-day after the Feast of the Annunciation, 1308, in the church of the Priory of the Holy Trinity in the parish of Aldgate, hard by what is now St. Katharine Cree Church, which indeed was built to serve the needs of parishioners who had been wont to worship in one of the chapels of the Priory church; and on this first day they contented themselves with reading the Papal Rescript, and the commission to the Prior and Sacrist, and the certificate of the Dean of Christianity, and with making a solemn preconisation thrice repeated. But no one appeared on Walter de Wenlok's side. However, as he, the "pars

[1] We cannot trace with certainty the name of the Archdeacon at this time; but it may have been Alexander de Persore, who is known to have held the office on 24 August, 1311 (*Mun.* 9505), and there would be a certain poetic justice in compelling him to make the citation.

appellata," had gone to his account,[1] the commissioners decided that out of reverence there must be no improper haste, and they adjourned till next morning, Saturday, in the expectation that some one might take the lists against the appellant. Saturday came; the same three documents were read; the same preconisation was repeated, with the same result; and then things took one step forward—Prior Hadham appointed as his lawful Proctor in the suit Master John de Deneby, who was throughout the trusted friend of the rebels against the Abbot. The Proctor porrected an article and the commissioners ordered the parties to be summoned for the Tuesday following (2 April). The article contained four petitions: that de Hadham might be absolved "ad cautelam" from Wenlok's excommunication of him; that he might be reinstated as Prior; that the grievances against which he had appealed might be remedied; and that his fellow-monks might be released from the late Abbot's inhibition against their having any communication with de Hadham as if he were Prior.

Tuesday, 2 April, came and with it more preliminary formalities. This time the Sacrist of Holy Trinity Priory sat without his superior, and the letter certificatory came from Thomas, the perpetual vicar of St. Martin-in-the-Fields. Newcourt has no record of him, nor indeed of any vicar before 1352; but our Domesday chartulary speaks of one Edmund as vicar of this church in Henry III's reign,[2] and in 1314 it refers[3] to Dom. Thomas, perpetual vicar of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, whom we may assume to be the man now before us. On the later occasion he renounced his claim that Richard de Kedyngton, Wenlok's successor, should pay him the greater and the lesser tithes arising from the abbatial demesnes of La Neyte and Eyebury. It was on 30 January, 1314, that Dom. Thomas appeared for this purpose on the west side of the nave of St. Paul's Cathedral about the first hour of the

[1] "Forte fatali sumpta". [2] f. 512 B.
[3] f. 105.

day before the Archdeacon of London's official; our monk, Robert de Beby, being one of the witnesses. But as to the case before us Dom. Thomas was merely a voice. He had cited the parties as he was commanded, and his certificate to that effect, dated 1 April, was duly read, and the seal which he had affixed was carefully vouched to be authentic. There followed a preconisation of those who had anything to allege against the person of Reginald de Hadham or against the Apostolic Rescript herein obtained, and after a pause the commissioner, with the assent of the Proctors sitting with him, decided to proceed in the case.

Whereupon the Proctor for the appellant, having received permission, produced certain public instruments dealing with his client's appeal and with the grievances referred to in the Apostolic Rescript, and professed himself ready to provide copies of these for any who were interested. The substance of these instruments, the first and the second, has already been stated in our account of the quarrel [1] and need not be repeated now, save that de Hadham, after giving the names of his sixteen compurgators, says that seven other monks were ready to vouch for his innocence, though the Abbot refused to give time for their return, and that the number was, or ought to be regarded as, quite sufficient. After hearing the instruments read, together with the notarial certificate which rounded them off, the Commissioner-Sacrist decided to adjourn till Saturday, 6 April, and following days, when the Proctor was to bring forward witnesses and any other instruments for proving his client's appeal and the grievances mentioned in the Rescript.

Saturday, then, being the day before Palm Sunday, was ushered in with the usual certificate of the vicar of St. Martin's, and then the Proctor produced three witnesses—one monk, John of London, and two laymen; he also porrected two instruments, a "prima prouocacio" and a "prima appellacio," which were read, and which stated the

[1] See pp. 174 ff.

case all over again. But we get the additional fact that 13 July, 1307, is established as the earliest known date in the contention. On that day de Hadham had put in his formal pleadings against the Abbot's conduct, and he had made Roger de Aldenham his formal mouthpiece, "sue vocis organum"; the appeal belonged to the next day, 14 July, and it is not without its touch of local colour to light up the dullness of its legal phraseology. Reginald, it says, presented himself in the Chapter House at Westminster near the tomb of Hugolin in company with a number of his fellow-monks, and there read his appeal; he made Brother John de London his mouthpiece, by whom he caused the appeal to be read and put forward in the Cloister before the entrance to the Chapter House. So we can reconstitute the scene. For Hugolin, the Confessor's famous and storied Chamberlain, had originally been interred in the Cloister of his master's Convent, and Flete[1] tells us how Henry III's rebuilding of the monastery caused a translation of the remains of Abbot Edwin, Queen Ethelgoda, Hugolin, and Brother Sulcard, the chronicler, from the Cloister to the King's new Chapter House, where they were placed in a marble tomb, still there in Flete's time, at the entrance and towards the south side of it.[2] On the wall above the tomb there was a special inscription of a couplet to Hugolin's memory, signifying that he died a martyr's death, and on a leaden tablet beneath the tomb were six elegiacs giving the four names; but the couplet on the wall, being most easily seen, would cause Hugolin's name to be specially associated with the spot. Hadham, then, and his friends are standing just inside the Chapter House, to the right as one enters it. The Abbot is doubtless in the central seat on the far side, facing westward. Between the Abbot and his men, and the dethroned Prior and his men, there is a great gulf fixed. But there is a third group, separated

[1] Ed. J. A. Robinson, p. 83.

[2] "Ad introitum domus predictae ex parte australi."

from the Chapter House by the length of its locutory, as the entrance to it was called,[1] and standing outside in the Cloister before the entrance, on the spot where Abbot Simon de Bircheston was afterwards interred.[2] It consists, as we have seen, of Brother John of London, who is reading the notice of appeal at length in the presence of witnesses—Richard Abbot, Roger de Presthope, Thomas de Boterwik, Wynchald the Treasurer's messenger, Michael de Knightebregge and William de Samford—and also of the notary, Robert, son of Gilbert de Wysebeche, clerk of the diocese of Ely. Certainly the most interesting figure of all is that of John of London, who is elsewhere described in our documents as "dictus le Beuere,"[3] and is credited rightly or wrongly with the authorship of the "Commendatio lamentabilis" and of the "Passio monachorum Westmonasteriensium".[4] Of all the company he alone is known, if in such a questionable shape, to the *Dictionary of National Biography*, which takes no notice at all of our two chief litigants.

But we must return to Saturday, 6 April, when John of London came forward as one of three witnesses and when, to avoid undue haste, the following Monday was fixed for their examination. On that day, unless there is an error in the record, their personality had changed; they were now two monks and one layman; and, doubtless because Easter was at hand, there was an adjournment for a fortnight, to the Monday immediately after Low Sunday,[5] i.e. 22 April, when the evidence of the witnesses would be heard.[6] On the day specified the commissary ordered that a copy of the evidence should be furnished to any interested person and that a summons should be issued for the

[1] Flete, p. 129.
[2] *Monks of Westminster*, p. 83.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 69.
[4] *Flores Historiarum*, iii. 117.
[5] "Post dominicam qua cantatur quasi modo geniti."
[6] *Mun.* 9499 B, the contents of which have been described on p. 180, is endorsed "Istud instrumentum fuit exhibitum x. Kalendis maii [= 22 April] apud sanctam Trinitatem coram sacrista loci eiusdem."

attendance of all who had any canonical proposition to bring forward against the witnesses or against their statements on the second law-day after the feast of the Invention of the Holy Cross, which would be Monday, 6 May.

So at last we come to the evidence. The first witness called was John of London, monk and priest, who appeared in support of the first article in the Proctor's contention, which was that his client, Reginald de Hadham, did duly and canonically attain to the Priorship. John, therefore, set forth that the office, as we have already seen, became vacant by the death of William de Huntyndon on St. Ambrose's Day, and that on the morrow of St. Peter ad Vincula Reginald, being unanimously elected, was placed by the Abbot in corporal possession of the office. Secondly, John affirmed that at Westminster election to the Priorship carries with it a perpetual occupation; it had always been so in his time and in the old time before him. Thirdly, John's evidence went to show that Reginald had retained his post in peace and quietness for over two years; there was no doubt about the fact, which indeed was notorious. The fourth item concerned itself with the subsequent conduct of Walter de Wenlok, the humble request made to him by the Prior and other monks that he would not bring hardship on the House by a violation of the laudable customs and compositions, and the hatred and harshness shown by him towards the Prior, whom without proper warning he suspended, in the first instance about the feast of St. Margaret,[1] and whom he cited on the feast of St. Giles (1 Sept.) to appear before him the next day, with the result already recorded. John's fifth, sixth and seventh counts dealt with Hadham's appeal, with the Abbot's inhibition to the monks as regards any obedience to him as Prior, and with the Abbot's excommunication

[1] I.e. 20 July. But this can hardly be taken as the exact date, because we have already given (p. 172) evidence that the Prior and his friends appointed Proctors under date 14 July. John speaks elsewhere of the Friday before St. Margaret's Day.

of him. Finally, John of London affirmed that Reginald, having duly placed before Wenlok his pleadings and his appeal, made request for letters dimissory; John knew this, because he and Brother Gwydo and many others were at La Neyte before dinner when it all took place.

John was followed by Roger de Presthope, clerk, whose name frequently appears in the legal affairs of the Monastery in this case, and generally at this period. He merely corroborated John of London's testimony, adding that, though he was not present when the Abbot proceeded to suspend Hadham, he was concerned in the pleadings and the appeal, and at La Neyte he witnessed Wenlok's absolute refusal of the request for letters dimissory. John the Gardener, a layman, who said he was over thirty years of age, confirmed the statements of Roger de Presthope, as did also two monks, Gwydo de Asshewelle and William de Almali. William Packet, clerk, aged twenty-two, the last comer, may be described as a witness as to character. He affirmed that it was notorious not only in Westminster but throughout the city of London that alike in Choir, in Chapter and in the Refectory Reginald de Hadham bore himself for two years and more as one who had been elected Prior by the Convent and installed by the Abbot. Such, then, was the evidence which was to be contested, if any cared to do so, on Monday, 6 May.

On that date there was read another letter certificatory from the Dean of Middlesex and the vicar of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, who recited the mandate they had received. This mandate is of more than ordinary interest. In it the Prior and Sacrist of Holy Trinity refer to a public citation of interested parties having been made in St. Paul's Cathedral, in the conventual church of Westminster, and in the Chapter House of the monks of that place in the presence of a number of monks and laymen, but in the (perhaps rather pointed) absence of a section of the monastery. For, as is here stated, Brother Richard de Suthbery, Abbot-elect, and certain other brethren,

Alexander de Persore and Henry Payn being named among them, were then preparing to take their journey to the Roman Court in order to secure confirmation of the election, and were at the moment abiding in the city of London or the near vicinity[1]; and the implication is that they could have been present, had they pleased, but, being of the contrary part, they abstained. The story of the troubled and contested election of Richard de Kedyngton, or de Sudbury, as Wenlok's successor, is really a prolongation of the present quarrel and must be noticed hereafter. It may be sufficient now to remark that, having been elected on 26 January, 1308,[2] he was still unable to set out for Rome on 6 May.

Having heard the certificate, the commissary fixed Thursday, 9 May, and finding that the opponents failed to enter an appearance, he then, with the advice and consent of his learned assessors and in accordance with justice, barred the way against further objectors, and appointed Wednesday, 15 May, for the final pronouncement in the case, when there was one more adjournment for safety's sake to Friday, 17 May.

Then at last the end came. Sitting in the porch of their church of the Holy Trinity, the two commissaries, having once more recited the Apostolic Rescript and their own commissions, revoked the sentences of suspension, excommunication, and privation as pronounced against de Hadham by Abbot Wenlok; they decreed that all the consequences that thus threatened both him and his adherents were null and void; and they declared that he was absolutely restored to his original status as Prior and to the full possession thereof with all due pertinences.

The record is concluded by the usual notarial certificate in the name of Richard, son of Philip de Brenchesle, clerk of the diocese of Rochester, who had the assistance of two

[1] "In ciuitate steterunt London. seu locis vicinis non multum distantibus a ciuitate" (*Mun.* 9496).

[2] *Monks of Westminster*, p. 73.

other notaries, John de Spaldewik and Nicholas de Kenilworthe, in verifying the text of the documents which he recites at length. The muniment (9496) is one of the fairest and freshest of its age in the Abbey's collection; evidently special care was taken of it on account of its importance; and it may be noted that it consists of nine skins, is 21 ft. in length by 10 ins. in breadth, and contains about 12,500 words.

Something, however, must be added as to the contents of a much smaller parchment[1] ($7\frac{1}{4}$ ins. × $3\frac{7}{8}$ ins.) which is sown into a bundle with several others that bear upon the case. It is written on both sides in the same hand, but the two sides contain distinct matters. There is no date to either, but that both belong to the closing days of this particular controversy is not doubtful. I give priority, though I am not sure on the point, to the matter contained under the heading: "Certain questions of difficulty for the Abbot's party which a clerk is to be asked to examine."[2] It runs as follows:—

First, whereas Brother Reginald de Hadham, at one time Prior of Westminster, made, as is stated, a provocation for himself and his adherents before sentence was pronounced against him, and also appealed after the same sentence—Can and must the provocation and the appeal be valid for his adherents as well as for himself, no declaration about their support having been put forward by any one?

Secondly, whereas after sentence of deprivation was passed upon him, Brother R. for some considerable time retired from the office of Prior and the care of the spiritualities, as though accepting the sentence and confirming it—Did he by his retention of the Prior's chamber and of the key of the common seal continue to maintain his status and holding as Prior, and, therefore, in now resuming his office, is

[1] *Mun.* 9499 C.

[2] "Dubitabilia adherencium Abbati per clericum discutienda."

he to be regarded as its real occupant or as an intruder?

Thirdly, whereas at the publication of the sentence of deprivation the Abbot gave strict injunctions in writing that, in virtue of sacred obedience and under pain of greater excommunication, the said Brother R. should not henceforth be restored, and also that no honour or reverence of any kind should be shown to him as Prior, and whereas the matter of the appeal is still pendent and undecided—Is it lawful for any monks of Westminster to defer to Brother R. as Prior without peril of any kind, notwithstanding the sentence and injunction of the Abbot?

There, then, is a case stated for counsel's opinion, and the moment of it is obvious. It belongs to May, 1308, or thereafter. Hadham has been reinstated after a suit before the Prior of Holy Trinity and without an effective appearance in that suit on the part of his opponents. But they are not satisfied. They cannot prevent his restoration, but they have their scruples. The appeal to Rome is still outstanding, and might bring a different result if it could be heard at the Papal Court. Brother Reginald has also perhaps compromised himself by not having complied fully with the sentence of deprivation which was the chief "gravamen" in the case he put forward; he cannot have it both ways; he has retained his official *camera* throughout; and it is doubtful if a man can be placed again in the Priorship, when a Prior is there already. The fact that the appeal has not been effectively proceeded with leaves Walter de Wenlok's spiritual threats still hurtling over their heads. Such were their three difficulties, real or imaginary, and the mere statement of them in this careful form implies that the Wenlokites were by no means satisfied with the result of the suit.

But their attitude is made clearer by the matter contained on the other side of the same parchment; it is again without date, but a reference to arrangements made by

the Abbot during his life-time shows that it belongs to 1308 or later. It is headed "Forma Pacis," and it will be best to give first a rendering of its text, which runs thus :—

If the chosen arbitrators should decide that obedience must be rendered to Brother R. de Hadham as Prior, and that elsewhere he is to have reverence in all things, the Abbot's party demands that the fact of their having taken sides with the Abbot against the Prior shall not at any time be brought up against any of them under a definite penalty to be inflicted by the arbitrators. And that, taking occasion from their attitude aforesaid, the Prior will not in future ill-treat or persecute any of them. Also the arbitrators should insist that there should be an absolute cessation of attacks, brawls, abuse, and other such general practices. As to scandalous reports, there should be a decree that all and singular should sincerely and absolutely renounce any action, accusation, and denunciation of infamy and incontinence against Brother A. de Perschore with regard to Beatrix de Baldok and Matilda de Dunelmia, which have been falsely and maliciously bruited, and also against William de Chalk about Roisia de Gysores ; and that there should be a general abandonment of other such charges.

As regards the financial scandals, the Abbot's party demands that Brother R. de Hadham should give satisfaction to the Convent in respect of the 100 marks which he obtained from the Convent Garden, and of the sum of money handed by him to Brother Richard de Waltham at the time of his departure for the Roman Court ; also that Brother Richard should pay to the Convent the £10 lost by him ; or at any rate that all demands of this kind should henceforth be abandoned. Also that all ordinances and instructions issued by the Abbot in his life-time, either verbally or in writing, should remain in force,

except the aforesaid process of deprivation, in so far as it must be legally confirmed or invalidated.

Out of this interesting relic we may gather one or two particulars about the conditions prevailing at the close of the trial. Possibly Wenlok's supporters were ready to make the best that they could of the situation in which they found themselves, and to approach the victorious Hadhamites in the interests of peace. It may even be that the Prior's party, conscious of their strong position, had expressed a willingness for a reference on outstanding disagreements to selected umpires.[1] The chief desire of Wenlok's adherents was that they should not henceforth be at the Prior's mercy; they had upheld tyranny in one quarter, and were anxious not to be the victims of tyranny from another quarter; for evidently there was going to be a long interval before the new Abbot would be confirmed in his power to protect them. Worse still, they were conscious of certain rents in their moral armour; for two of their chiefs, Alexander of Pershore and William of Chalk, had given cause to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme by reason of their alleged association with women whose names were known, Alexander with two English women, and William with one from Normandy. The arbitration afforded the Wenlokites a chance to clean the slate of these malicious aspersions, and it is significant that there are no similar accusations against the Hadhamites which they can offer to withdraw in their turn. The only charge against the Hadhamites is that which was urged during the proceedings at Holy Trinity, namely, that there had been peculation by de Hadham of moneys received by him through his occupation of Convent offices. These charges were not investigated by the commissaries; they only came before them in the report of a speech made by the Abbot; and no monks came forward at the trial to substantiate the charges, and thus to show cause why de Hadham should not be restored to office. The fact is that the accusations

[1] Perhaps the Justices mentioned in *Mun.* 12777 (see p. 202).

of dishonesty refer to matters which date from times before the Prior's election in 1305, and we may take it that his answer and that of his friends to this part of the "forma pacis" was that the election itself settled the point. All we can say is that peace was not wholly restored and that we must expect to hear of further stages in the quarrel.

As much has been said in the course of this litigious story about Brother Roger de Aldenham, with whom, indeed, we have by no means finished, it is fair to record that after a similarly leisurely process he was relieved of the "gravamina" which Abbot Wenlok laid upon him. The matter is contained in a parchment,[1] which is a somewhat less fortunate companion of *Mun.* 9496, for the top of it has been torn away, yet not so seriously as to spoil the contents. In this case the Apostolic Rescript was issued by Clement V at Poitiers on 4 August, 1308; which may be taken to imply that, as soon as the Prior was safely reinstated, efforts were made by him to secure the restoration of his most faithful henchman. The Rescript entrusted the investigation to the Prior of Holy Trinity, London, the principal judge in de Hadham's suit, and he, pleading, as before, that arduous affairs denied him sufficient leisure, handed his functions to his Precentor and his Sacrist, of whom the latter had by this time acquired no small knowledge of the personal side of these Abbey quarrels. Their commission from the Prior is dated 4 November, 1308, and the letter certificatory addressed to the Archdeacon of Westminster and the Dean of Christianity, Middlesex, shows that the case was called for the fourth law-day after the Feast of All Saints at the same church of Holy Trinity, London. The citation, said the Dean, had been duly made in the Abbey Church and in St. Margaret's, and no opponent of Roger de Aldenham had declared himself except Brother John de Butterle.[2] We thus realise for the first time that this monk must be reckoned as a pronounced adherent of Wenlok; we

[1] *Mun.* 9495; *Mun.* 9494 is another copy.

[2] Cf. *Monks of Westminster*, p. 67.

should expect it because of his constant association with the Abbot's affairs; but he was also an important official of the Convent, having recently (24 June, 1308) ceased to be Chamberlain, and having been implicated, moreover, in the Robbery of the Treasury. At that time, 1303, he was Warden of St. Mary's Chapel, a post of much financial responsibility, which is described in the evidence about the burglary as "Redditarius fabrice capelle sancte Marie Westm.".[1] We also note that, as before, Roger de Presthope was the principal Proctor for the appellant, Roger de Aldenham, but that he substituted Nicholas de Kenilworthe, clerk, as his deputy. The deputy pleaded that all punishments inflicted on Roger de Aldenham after the issue of the two appeals to Rome, and in particular his excommunication and the charge of apostasy brought against him after his appeals, should be revoked and made utterly null and void, and that Roger should be fully restored to the status that he held before the appeals were made. On the other hand, the record deliberately omits the text of a proctorial representation made by the monks opposed to Brother Roger, on the grounds, first, that it was not clear that they were concerned, and, secondly, that it had been made without the consent of their superior; in other words, of Reginald de Hadham himself, for he was Prior, whereas Richard de Kedyngton was far from being confirmed as Abbot. This is clear from a letter which was put forward the following day by the Prior. Its purpose was to invalidate the action of certain brethren—Peter de Cruce, Alexander de Persore, and Thomas[2]—in appointing one John Oysel as their Proctor. If the instrument by which they did so had been transcribed in full, we might have a complete list of Wenlok's party, but it is contemptuously abbreviated. It bore the Archdeacon's seal, and we have

[1] Palgrave, *Kal. and Invent. Excheq.*, I, 267.

[2] This must, I think, be Thomas de Dene (*Monks of Westminster*, p. 68). The only other Thomas at this time, as far as we know, was de Woburne, who was a Hadhamite.

already noticed that Alexander de Persore may then have been Archdeacon. It was dated Wednesday, 6 November, 1308. De Hadham's letter gave notice that any such document was issued against his wish and without his licence; indeed, he had forbidden all and singular his monks to leave the Monastery for any such litigious purpose or to be absent from the Cloister, except, of course, the Obedientiaries who had their respective duties to attend to.

We pass on to Tuesday, being the next law-day after the Feast of St. Martin in Winter—i.e. 12 November—when the Precentor and the Sacrist of Holy Trinity took their seats, and Roger de Aldenham appeared, but not his opponents, and the documents were all read again; and after a sufficient interval of waiting for the opponents an adjournment to the morrow was decreed. Next day there came a certain Hamo de Wenlok—an ominous name—as substitute for John Oysel, the Proctor of the opponents; so there was further adjournment to the first law-day after St. Andrew's Day, when Hamo again exhibited his authority to plead, and some argument took place upon it, and the next day was fixed for interlocutory purposes; but the only result on the morrow was Hamo's request for a copy of all the instruments in the case, his right to intervene on behalf of the opponent monks being still undecided. On the morrow, however, the Prior of Holy Trinity pronounced against that right "in the form in which it was put forward," and then named the Monday next after the Feast of St. Nicholas—i.e. 9 December—for the next session, at which his Sacrist presided in his stead. After reading the commission from the Prior to the Sacrist—it had been sealed by the Prior that morning—and the record of the previous day's proceedings, there appeared two Proctors for the adversaries, Henry de Norwyco and Henry de Warefeld, who asked that their "procuratorium" should be read. But they did not produce a copy of it; so the proceedings were adjourned for that till Friday, the 13th, when there was some argument and an adjournment

to Saturday, when Henry of Norwich, on being challenged to produce anything that would elucidate the case, turned out to have nothing of the kind, but Roger de Aldenham's Proctor put forward two witnesses in support of his client, namely, William called Packet, whom we have met before, and Adam de Horsethe, clerks.

So the commissary, as Christmas was coming, decreed a longer interval before the matter could proceed further, and named the first law-day after St. Hilary's Day, which would be Tuesday, 14 January, 1309. But this was too much for Henry of Norwich who contumaciously declined to wait, and retired from the case. Meantime the Prior and monks of Westminster, *sede Abbatis vacante*, were to be cited and the two witnesses examined. On 14 January, in spite of further citation, the Wenlokite monks failed to appear, but Roger's Proctor brought two witnesses, John le Gardiner, who intervened in the previous case, and William David of Westminster, and the next law-day after the Feast of the Purification was appointed for the publication of their evidence. That day brings us to the final letter certificatory of the Dean of Christianity, Middlesex, to the effect that he had summoned the unwilling monks to appear on the day named, which would be Monday, 3 February. But again they failed to appear and, as the evidence of the witnesses was deemed satisfactory, there was one more adjournment to Wednesday, 5 February, and then at last the commissary was in a position to pronounce the punishments inflicted by Abbot Wenlok on Brother Roger, the excommunication and the sentence of apostasy, to be now revoked as null and void, thus restoring him to the position he held in the House before he made his appeal from the Abbot to the Pope. Thus a case which began in the Curia in August, 1308, did not come to its close, in spite of an entire lack of effective opposition, till 5 February, 1309. We shall find Roger de Aldenham in further trouble later on. Meanwhile he is once more in his place in Choir and in Chapter, while the Abbot-elect

is still a long way from being confirmed in his office, and Reginald de Hadham is for the time being head of the House as Prior.

Page 168. *Mun.* 9508 A.

In dei nomine amen Cum dignitas et status prioratus ecclesie Westm. Londonensis Dioceseos ad Romanam ecclesiam nullo medio pertinentis ordinis sancti Benedicti per mortem bone memorie fratris Willelmi de Huntingdon quondam eiusdem loci prioris ad ipsum prioratum per viam compromissi canonice electi instituti in eodem seu installati prout fieri debuit et consueuit iam diu est vacauerit sunt que bona ipsius loci Abbatis per quandam composicionem de consensu quondam Abbatis et Conuentus eiusdem ordinatam sigillis eciam domini Regis Anglie patroni eiusdem loci et aliorum Regni procerum et magnatum roboratam ac eciam auctoritate summi pontificis confirmatam totaliter a bonis Prioris et Conuentus ipsius loci discreta et separata cuius quidem ecclesie monachi tam de iure quam consuetudine sunt et fuerunt in possessione iuris vel consuetidinis Priore dicti monasterii cedente vel decedente alium sibi in Priorem eligendi iuxta formas eleccionum a iure traditas et introductas inconcusse a tempore cuius contrarii memoria non existit et quia ex quibusdam verisimilibus et probabilibus coniecturis indiciis certis et communicacionibus perpenditur quod reuerendus pater dominus W. dei gracia Abbas[1] a supradictis formis dicti loci eleccionum perperam deuiauit seu intendit deuiare prefatam consuetudinem laudabiliter in presenti monasterio hactenus vsitatam irritando. ne idem Abbas seu quivis alius nomine suo auctoritate vel mandato in preiudicium iuris et consuetudinis nostre canonice eleccionis ordine et forma pretermissis aliquem criminosum conuictum seu infamem vel alium quemlibet licet abilem cuiuscunque fuerit status vel condicionis per potenciam seu motum voluntarium contra canonicas sanctiones in dicti prioratus Officium seu dignitatem quomodolibet introducat preficiat installet seu intrudat et ne idem Abbas ex indignacione preconcepta in preiudicium diminucionem subuersionem seu priuacionem status et honoris mei vel aliorum quorumcunque confratrum nostrorum michi in hac parte adherencium seu adherere volencium exnunc quidquam faciat ordinet diffiniat

[1] The words "vos pater sancte" have been deleted, and there are other corrections to correspond.

seu decernat silencium imponendo suspendendo excommunicando priuando a communione fratrum separando seu quovis alio modo dampnum molestiam vel grauamen inferendo temere quidquam attemptet seu attemptari faciat ego frater Rogerus de Aldenham monachus istius ecclesie et professus cuius notorie interest in hac parte pro statu communi et defensione iuris et consuetudinis nostre ac eciam pro me et omnibus michi adherentibus seu adherere volentibus in hac parte sacrosanctam sedem Apostolicam et pro tuicione Curiam Cantuariensem audienciam domini nostri Regis patroni istius loci ac eciam audienciam examen seu potestatem conseruatorum priuilegiorum prioris et conuentus istius loci in hiis scriptis prouoco et appello et apostolos peto seu petere intendo cum effectu in euentum futuri grauaminis subiciens me statum que meum et aliorum quorumcunque michi ut permittitur adherencium seu adherere volencium tuicioni et defensioni sacrosancte sedis supradicte Regis conseruatorum et Curie prenotate Protestans nomine meo et fratrum predictorum quod si quisquam de predictis criminosis per qualemcunque viam eligatur seu quiuis alius licet dignus contra formas eleccionum in Priorem preficiatur installetur introducatur seu intrudatur dictam criminosorum eleccionem seu alterius cuiuscunque introduccionem installacionem seu intrusionem me velle impugnare irritare et pro viribus meis adnullare nec tali electo introducto seu intruso in aliquo tanquam Priori obedire seu parere set ipsam eleccionem introduccionem installacionem seu intrusionem cassas nullas vanas vacuas et inanes reputare habere et tenere et contra ipsas prosequi cum effectu: R.

Page 172. *Mun.* 12777.

Edwardus dei gracia Rex Anglie Dominus Hibernie et Dux Aquitanie delectis sibi in christo Priori et Conuentui de Westmonasterio salutem. Quia dissensiones controuersie et discordie diuerse pacis emulo procurante inter vos hiis diebus vt accepimus suscitantur ac bonorum monasterii illius dilapidaciones multipliciter ibi fiunt ex quibus mens nostra grauatur non immerito et turbatur maxime cum ipsarum occasione nisi correctionis manum ad hoc cituis apponamus dampna non modica et dispendia irrecuperabilia monasterio predicto de facili iminere et elemosine nostre ibidem subtrahi poterunt, quod tolerare nolumus, sicuti nec debemus, assignamus dilectos et fideles nostros Rogerum le Brabazon, Willelmum de Bereford,

Rogerum de Hegham, Willelmum Inge et Johannem de Benestede quatuor tres vel duos eorum ad inquirendum viis et modis omnibus quibus melius expedire viderint per quos vel per quem dissensiones controuersie et discordie huius modi ibidem sunt suborte ac dilapidaciones predicte facte et super quibus et ex qua causa et qualiter et quo modo, et ad omnes illos quos dissensiones controuersias et discordias huius modi ibidem inuenerunt suscitasse predictas que dilapidaciones fecisse iuxta eorum demerita et prout ad nos pertinere dinoscitur puniendos necnon ad dissensiones controuersias et discordias predictas sedandas et pacificandas prout ad honorem dei et ad vtilitatem monasterii predicti iuxta discreciones suas melius viderint faciendum sicut in literis nostris patentibus ipsis inde confectis plenius continetur. Et ideo vobis mandamus quod prefatis Rogero Willelmo Rogero Willelmo et Johanni quatuor tribus aut duobus eorum in premissis omnibus et singulis quotiens ipsi quatuor tres aut duo eorum vobis scire fecerint pareatis ac eciam intendatis. Teste me ipso apud Wyndesore xiiij die Julii anno regni nostri secundo (14 July, 1308).

Page 173. *Mun.* 5671.

Vniuersis presentes litteras inspecturis Walterus permissione diuina Abbas Westm. salutem in domino sempiternam. Licet suborta nuper dissencionis materia inter fratrem Reginaldum de Hadham et quosdam suos complices commonachos nostros ex parte vna et nos ex altera super quibusdam articulis composiciones inter predecessores nostros et conuentum suum dudum habitas tangentibus prescripcione legitima et aliis iuris defencionibus adeo muniti fuerimus quod ad obseruacionem eorundem compelli de iuris rigore minime debeamus. Precibus tamen quorundam commonachorum nostrorum quos filios obediencie inuenimus equitate eciam pensata inclinantes predictas composiciones innouamus ratificamus et confirmamus ac ipsas futuris temporibus obseruare pro nobis et successoribus nostris bona fide promittimus nisi quatenus per litteras sigillo nostro communi signatas aparere poterit nos ad premissa arcari seu astringi pro tempore nostro non debere. Et vt hec predicta innouacio ratificacio et confirmacio futuris temporibus quibuslibet plenius innotescat sigillum commune capituli nostri vna cum sigillo nostro presentibus est appensum. Dat' apud Westm. die veneris in crastino Assumpsionis beate marie anno domini millesimo trecentesimo septimo (16 Aug., 1307).

CHAPTER XII.

A VACANCY AND ANOTHER ELECTION.

WENLOK'S death appears to have been rather sudden. He was by no means inactive during his last year, 1307. He was at Westminster in March[1] and then spent several weeks at Pyrford in Surrey.[2] From then onwards through the summer his headquarters were at Eye Manor or La Neyte, Westminster, though he rode down to Denham for a few days at the end of July.[3] The last letter[4] of his that bears date and place shows that he was still at La Neyte on St. Matthew's Day (21 Sep.), but we can tell that at some time before Michaelmas he had been further afield, for he paid a visit to Birdbrook in Essex, one of Queen Alianore's Manors,[5] and did so in none of the luxury due to an invalid, the Provost laying out sevenpence on crockery for his use during his stay.

Our next date is Advent Sunday, 3 December, when the outlays included "medicines and other necessaries"[6] for the Abbot; something had happened rather suddenly, for recently, in the early part of November, Wenlok had spent £16 on a horse for himself—eight or nine times as much as he would expect to be charged for a horse for one of his monks or retainers. And the illness, whatever it was, developed seriously. On the morrow of St. Barbara, Virgin, they called to Pyrford Manor a physician, named Master Robert de Renham, whose fee was £5; but the faithful Alexander de Persore was still not satisfied, and recourse was had to a "second opinion," Master John le Gros, for £2. Some of those who stood by his bed must

[1] *Mun.* 31473. [2] *Mun.* 31474, 31477. [3] *Mun.* 31492-4.
[4] *Mun.* 31499. [5] *Mun.* 25414. [6] *Mun.* 24260.

have remembered that in 1288, when he was compiling the charter of his anniversary,[1] he had inserted that same date, the morrow of St. Barbara, which may have been his birthday, as the day on which his brethren should each receive twelvepence to buy spices, and should provide themselves a special pittance with whatever balance[2] remained over from £4, which he assigned annually to this purpose from the rents of the houses in St. Edward's Market allotted to the skinners. Eight days later, on Christmas Day—"in medio secundae missae in nocte natalis domini"[3]—Walter de Wenlok breathed his last.

Now, it is natural to ask what were the actual proceedings in a monastery whose master was thus taken from its head, and we can give some slight but significant answer presently in the case before us. We possess, however, very detailed information about a similar situation, and it will help us to deal with it here.

Abbot Thomas de Henle died on 29 October, 1344. Our first knowledge of him belongs to the year 1330, less than a quarter of a century after Wenlok's death; but as he was then Treasurer of the Convent—an office of great responsibility seldom attained within twelve or fourteen years of a monk's admission—he probably approaches much nearer to Wenlok's period. On the day of Henle's death, Edward III committed the charge of the Abbot's portion—"temporalium ad abbatem Westmonasterii spectantium"—to his clerk, William Kelleseye, afterwards revoking these letters and placing the responsibility on Roger Basset.

But the Convent also had interests to guard during the vacancy, and the document[4] before us is the account of

[1] Flete, p. 120; Domesday, f. 87.

[2] The monks numbered fifty in 1307; *Mun.* 24260..

[3] *Flor. Hist.*, III, 140.

[4] "Compotus ffratris Nichi de Littlyngton et Johis de Crendone Custodum Temporalium Abbatis tempore vacacionis a xxxo die Octobris Anno Regni Regis Edwardi Tercii post conquestum xviiio usque xxvitum Marcii proxime sequentis Anno Regni Regis Eiusdem Decimo nono" *Mun.* 5467 A).

the two monks who were appointed, no doubt by their brethren in Chapter assembled, to receive the sums due to the Abbot's estate and to make the necessary payments. The two were Nicholas Litlington, afterwards Abbot, and John de Crendon, and, quite apart from the subsequent greatness of one of them, it is not difficult to realise why they were chosen; for in that same year, 1344-45, Litlington was Convent Treasurer, and Crendon, at least up to 4 April, 1344, had been Abbot's Treasurer, and probably so remained till his lord's death.[1] They were, in fact, the very men to do the work. Litlington was now about thirty-five years of age and Crendon three or four years his junior.

They begin with a statement of rents from the manors belonging to the Abbot's portion and enter the sums brought in by the Provosts and servants at Eybury, Westminster; Pyrford; Laleham, Staines, and Yeoveney; Denham; Islip; Bourton and Hardwicke; Chaddesley, Moreton Castle, and Pershore; and it says something for the extent of an Abbot's responsibilities that during the twenty-three days £213 11s. 1d. came in in respect of rent or arrears. Live-stock was sold for £41 8s. 1d., and a few other payments carried the total up to £297 0s. 2d. Thus, if this rate of revenue were to be regarded as normal, we should need to reckon the abbatial receipts at something not far short of £100 a week. But we must allow for the fact that the Abbot's death would tend to a clearing up, on the tenants' part, of their outstanding liabilities and probably we ought to regard the rate of revenue as above the normal.

The expenditure begins from the time of the Abbot's actual decease. There were the "necessaria pro corpore" to be provided, including a set of vestments, dalmatic, albe apparelled in "Bokeram," amice, stole, maniple, and mitre, with gloves, "sandelmes," and shoes, all "de Bokeram". For all this they paid but 16s., besides 4s. for a pectoral

[1] Cf. *Monks of Westminster*, pp. 84, 88.

cross. There was some measure of embalming to be secured; so they bought 1 lb. of "cotun," 1 lb. of incense, and 1 lb. of "Tirbenteyne," costing 6s. 8d.; also 8 yards of canvas "pro corpore inuolutando" at 2½d. a yard. It seems that this cerement was presently treated with wax, for there is an entry of 8½ lb. of wax "pro caneuacio cereando," 3s. 3d., and a payment of 2s. to the man who placed this waxed canvas on the Abbot's corpse. There was also, of course, no small outlay on illumination, the chief items being 188 penny-candles, a considerable weight of "waste" to be made up into yet more candles, and four "mortiers"—probably large candles (weighing 40 lb.) to stand round the bier. Brother Crendon had to make two voyages from Westminster to London, the face-value of the journey money being the same as now, namely 2d.; and there were two persons entitled to special consideration for their "pains" under this head—the Abbey Chandler, who received 3s. 4d., and the Sacrist, to whom, by the special instruction of the Prior, there was given a sum of 40s., precursor of those fees on state occasions which are having such a lingering death. The tantalising nature of monastic documents is well illustrated in this particular entry. Under the head of receipts we find some names of monks without their offices; here—"dat' Sacriste Westm." —we have the office without the name; yet the mention of the name here would have filled a *lacuna* in our local knowledge of the Westminster Sacrists,[1] which tells us that John de Mordon held the office in 1341, and Hugh de Shenegeyze in the earlier part of 1346[2]; it is only a Papal record[3] of the election now impending which enables us to say that John de Mordon was Sacrist on 10 November, 1344. The presumption is that he retained the post till September, 1345, and was then succeeded by Hugh de Shenegeyze.

But what of the tomb? Our compotus-roll does not

[1] *Monks of Westminster*, p. 197. [2] *Ibid.*, pp. 87, 88.
[3] Kal. Pap. Reg., iii. 182.

concern itself with the exact place of burial, for the place has little effect on the cost of digging, which in this case was represented by "beuerache dat' hominibus facientibus predictam Tumbam per duas vices xijd.". But somehow John Flete knew the place of Abbot Henle's rest and describes[1] it as being in the northern sector of the lower pavement before the high altar, where the Paschal Candle stood. Our document will only tell us that the sum of £8 13s. 4d. was paid for the tomb, which was made by one William Ramessore. The stone cost 2s. 6d. for its conveyance from London to Westminster, or fifteen times the fare of a human passenger.

We pass on to the heading called "Distribucio pauperum," which, however, includes several other matters. Twenty quarters of wheat were brought from various estates to be made into loaves to feed the poor and the prisoners,[2] to whom a further distribution was made at the "month's mind". A pittance[3] costing 6s. 8d. was given to the brethren of each of the four Orders of Dominicans, Carmelites, Augustinians and Franciscans, who took part in the vigil and in the morrow's mass. The late Abbot's epitaph was written and illuminated for 6d. One shilling's worth of parchment was bought whereon to write the funeral briefs for announcing the death to other houses, and the "breuiator," who delivered them took a fee of 1 mark. The church-servants who tolled the bell and dug the grave had 6s. 8d., but it is hard to see why the oblation

[1] *History of Westminster* (ed. J. Armitage Robinson), p. 126.

[2] Cf. J. Armitage Robinson, *Abbot's House at Westminster*, pp. 11, 12, n. 1; 16 f. The gate-house was reconstructed under Litlington's direction by Walter de Warfeld, the Cellarer, who had entered the Convent about two years after Abbot Henle's death (*Monks of Westminster*, p. 96). Comparing *Lib. Nig. Quat.*, f. 79*b*—"murum inter Cameram Abbatis et prisonam"—with *Mun.* 9498—"opus muri lapidei inter Cameram domini Abbatis et gaolam clericorum," we might conclude that the prisoners were clerks-convict; but the gate-house was made responsible also for the detention of more miscellaneous felons.

[3] A special meal, see below.

at the high altar at the funeral service should have been fixed at 4s. 10d.; it is too much to be at the rate of 1d. for each brother and 2d. for the Prior. If there was a pittance for visiting Friars, it is to be expected that the same should happen to the Convent brethren both on the funeral-day with its vigil, and at the "month's mind"; and we can state the details of the former collation, which consisted of 20 cod, 2 salmon, 400 herrings, 300 roach, 308 eels, 4 pike, 4 large eels, and 100 lampreys, and which cost £2 4s. 11d. If the brethren numbered about forty-eight, this means less than 1s. each for three days' food, but their shilling must be taken to represent between fifteen and twenty of ours.

There follows a collection of items headed "necessaria prouidencia," part of which perhaps goes to show that the large provision of fish just mentioned was necessary for feeding not the brethren only but the funeral guests as well. There are purchases of 250 goblets—"ciphi"—180 pitchers, 24 lb. of candles and 27 lb. of wax for torches. Six carpenters were hired for three days to make trestles and benches and tables for use both in the Refectory and in the Cloister, and a butcher was called in to slaughter and to skin oxen and sheep and pigs—all betokening a large assembly. At the beginning of the paragraph we have mention of that useful Brother, Richard de Beby,[1] being sent round to invite friends to the obsequies, especially the Abbot of St. Albans, and presently there comes a payment of 3d. to the bearer of a letter from Beby written at "Haueryng' atte Boure". But more than half the expenditure recorded at this point is represented by a sum of £7 5s. 9d. expended on spices bought for the funeral. These spices, which have no apparent connexion with the embalming of the body, must be intended to add either to the comfort of the guests or to the seasoning of the viands.

But our two Guardians of the Temporalities were not

[1] Cf. *Monks of Westminster*, p. 71 f.

only responsible for the funeral rites and the funeral bake-meats. It was their business to maintain the Abbot's Hospice from the day after his death to the day when the successor could take over the charge himself. We therefore come next to a detailed statement of the daily outlay on the abbatial establishment as Henle had left it. We begin, then, on the 30th of October, a Saturday—the Abbot had died on Friday. This journal of outgoings makes it fairly certain that Henle's death occurred at Westminster, for the supplies entered are for a considerable retinue and there are three and twenty horses in the stables. Most of the authorities [1] state, without giving any reference, that Henle's decease took place at Oxford. But, apart from the Abbot's establishment being at Westminster, we have seen that all the preparations for laying out and embalming the body are entered as if they belonged to Westminster, and it is at least doubtful if a man who died at Oxford on Friday, 29 October, could have been buried at Westminster on Thursday, 4 November, especially when we consider the preparations necessary for the function. Nor is there any mention of the cost of the journey with the body from Oxford to Westminster —a cost which the Guardians of the Temporalities would be bound to defray. And the State Papers [2] add to the improbability of the Oxford story by showing that on 4 November, the day of the funeral, the King, being then at Melford in Suffolk, issued his licence to the Prior and Convent to elect another Abbot. This would mean, if the statement about Oxford is to stand, that the news of the death was brought to London; a Chapter held to draw up a letter reporting the death to the King and to appoint Robert de Beby and Thomas de Wenlok to bear it in

[1] Dart, II, xxix.; Neale, i. 74; E. T. Murray Smith, *Westminster Abbey*, p. 75; but not the omniscient Widmore, who had looked at the document now before us; for (p. 89) he gives the date of the funeral, 4 November, which can only be obtained from the Guardian's daily accounts: "die jouis iiii^to die Nouembris die Sepulture Abbatis".

[2] Kal. Pat. Rolls, 1343-45, p. 365.

person; and the Royal licence to elect drawn up and executed;—all in the space of six days.

For want of other authority it may be conjectured that the error arose in this way. "Henley," says Mrs. Murray Smith, "spent seven years of his abbacy with other Benedictine students at Gloucester Hall, Oxford". Now, it is true, apparently, that he was a student, for on 7 June, 1335, Edward III at York issued his licence to him to be absent from Westminster for seven years from that date in order to reside in universities or places of sound and flourishing learning, whether abroad or at home, on condition that he avoided Scotland and any country at war with the King.[1] This permission might, of course, include Oxford, which was the natural goal of a studious Westminster monk. But the facts point to Henle's goal being in foreign parts; for on 3 April, 1336, the Abbot was allowed to nominate two attorneys in England for the next seven years (one being John de Tothale,[2] his fellow-monk), on the ground that he was going to pursue his studies "in partibus transmarinis".[3] But, if he went, he returned before his leave had expired, for on 4 October, 1341, a royal pardon was issued to him and to Brother Nicholas de Litlington for having poached in Windsor Forest: they had killed a stag and a hind and had taken them away.[4] Indeed, before the date of this pardon, he presided at Northampton over the General Chapter of the Benedictine Order held in September, 1340.[5] Finally, the suggestion that the Abbot died at Oxford must reckon with the fact that the Guardians of the Temporalities enter a payment of 3s. 4d. to a courier—one Thomas Prestep—"querenti confratres nostros Oxonie pro eleccione". If Henle had died in their midst the two Oxford scholars

[1] Kal. Pat. Rolls, 1335-38, p. 116.

[2] *Monks of Westminster*, p. 77.

[3] Kal. Pat. Rolls, 1335-38, p. 238.

[4] For Litlington's weapons of the chase, cf. *William de Colchester*, p. 26; and *Mun.* 5446.

[5] Reyner, *de Antiq. Benedict*, scrip. lix.

would naturally have accompanied his remains to Westminster and would have been retained there till Simon de Bircheston had been chosen in his room.

And that takes us back to the journal of the Guardians' daily expenditure which shows us that the election took place six days after Henle's funeral, that is on Wednesday, 10 November. It involved no great rise in the regular expenses; indeed, the horses in the stable had been reduced to sixteen, and the fare provided for the retinue was modest and simple—a little beef, pork and mutton, some rabbits, three capons, a pike, a salmon, "Schrympes and Wolkes". But the verso of the roll has to be used to record a considerable outlay, called "expense pro Eleccione et Electo". His new lordship and three companions required some special clothing, which was a proper charge on the abbatial revenues[1] rather than on the conventual—one "pannus" of murrey[2] colour, costing 40s. 6d.; one "pannus stragulatus," i.e. parti-coloured, 28 ells in length, for the horsemen who rode with him, costing 35s.; and fur-cloaks costing 77s. 6d. The Guardians also bought two "malesadeles" for 11s. 8d., and to a certain "little Watte" they paid £15 6s. 8d. for four horses—again, no doubt, for the Elect and his three companions; while the new Abbot's pages received an outfit in the cloth commonly known as "Candelwikstrete".

No less interest attaches to the "expense forinsece," which concerned the public and official side of the election. The first thing was to secure the King's authority to proceed to fill the vacancy, and Robert Beby and Thomas Wenlok were the brethren delegated to convey the Convent's petition to Edward III, then at Long Melford, in Suffolk; but to do this they must needs pass by Sudbury, where some of their number were resident in the daughter Priory of St. Bartholomew and must be summoned to the election. This journey cost 17s. Also after his election

[1] Cf. *Monks of Westminster*, p. 13.

[2] "Coloris mor'" (morati = mulberry).

the new Abbot must present himself to the King, and his expenses in so doing were 60s., though it is fair to say that this sum included the cost of the letters patent issued by the Chancery.

But the same heading also reveals to us the amount of going and coming, whether personally or by letter, which was an inseparable part of an Abbot's life and was now falling upon these interim deputies. Nicholas Litlington and John Crendon must visit what our documents always call "the western parts," a group of abbatial property in the counties of Worcester, Warwick and Gloucester, where they passed the bailiffs' accounts and set things generally in order. They must also receive and entertain any visitors who come to the Abbey on business connected with the temporalities; for example, there are the "expenses of Dan William Kelleseie when he dined with Brothers N. de Litlington and John de Crendon," 4s. 11d., Kelleseie being a clerk in the Royal Household who was concerned with payments assigned to the Queen during the vacancy. A letter has to go to all our servants to tell them that they are not to pay any heed to William Kelleseie, and we get the authority for this presently in a reference to a sealed letter of the Queen [Mother] addressed to the same Kelleseie "ne ultra se intromitteret," not to meddle any further. Also the costs and cure of the horses employed in all this business are debited to the Abbot's account. Here is a pottle of honey bought for a sick horse for 3d. and other medicines for 11d. Here is another horse called Gerrard who is "vetted"[1] for 2s.; here is 4s. 7d. paid in a third case for Litlington's horse "eo quod infirmabatur in seruicio domini Abbatis in partibus occidentalibus". It will follow that the personal wear and tear of the Guardians and their effects must also fall as a charge upon the same fund; thus Litlington's saddle has to be mended in so far as it was injured in the Abbot's service, and each Guardian receives a pair of boots (at 1s. 9½d. a pair) to replace what he had

[1] "Dat' mareschallo pro cura equi vocati Gerrard, ij. s."

worn through in the same cause. Whether it was quite as seemly to give 3s. 4d. each to W. Lauenham and W. Leicestr' "ut essent nobiscum in querela contra dominum Hugonem de Spencer," who can tell?

Once more, apart from all these incidental charges, there was still the principle that the labourer is worthy of his hire, and there was the further principle that the helper is worthy of his recognition. The two Guardians, therefore, receive their wages—eleven ells of burnet cloth to make them capes, 11s. each. So do various members of the Abbot's retinue—soldiers, four clerks, six esquires, officials, grooms, and pages. These last were paid in "Candelwikstrete," and the rest in "panni". But let it not be supposed that the payments were nominal; for the "panni" given to the esquires cost 46s. 8d. each, and the sum spent on this "empcio pannorum" was £37 19s. 11d.—or nearly £600 of our money. Recognitions to those who had helped took the form either of furs or of money or of both. The sum spent on fur-garments was £13 11s. 2d. and the price of the garments varied from 28s. for a miniver given to William Trussel down to 2s. 2d. for something in lamb's-wool. Only four recipients are mentioned besides Trussel, namely, John Shordich, William Stouwe, Master Henry Chaddesden, and Master Stephen Ketelburi, of whom Sir John de Shoreditch was a man of note and a benefactor to the Abbey.

But gifts in kind did not satisfy all who had been concerned in the election. For in addition to his "poppel" fur Master Henry Chaddesden received a present of £10; Dan William Kelleseie, already mentioned, a purse[1] and 40s.; the Chief Notary and his colleagues, £7 6s. 8d.; the Escheator of Worcester, 20s.; and the esquire of "Dominus . . . le Hastyng senescalli domine Regine," 13s. 4d., the object being "ut ipse citius expediret negocia penes Reginam". There is also an interesting gift of a pair of shoes to one William Wenlok, clerk of the Treasury, "pro

[1] "j aluer'."

scrutacione de Domesday" in the matter of the manor of Deerhurst, by the hands of Brother Thomas. . . .[1]

Once more, before the new Abbot could start fairly, there must be a payment of his own outstanding obligations; to Brother John de Ryngstede,[2] who was at that time Infirmarer and who was one of the electors, 5s. 6d. "pro suo exennio"; to Brother Richard de Wynton, 25s. for arrears of rents to Michaelmas, no doubt because Wynton was then Monk-bailiff[3]; to Brother John de Ashwelle, £6 13s. 4d., without reason assigned, it not being certain that Ashwelle was an Obedientiary at this time; and to Brother John de Mordon "pro nouo Edificio in claustro," £33 11s. 2d.

This last is an entry of considerable interest. For the new Abbot had been in partnership with Mordon for the three preceding years, 1341-44, as "Custodes Noui Operis," or Wardens of the New Work on the Nave.[4] Mr. Rackham has explained[5] how, having gained the appropriation of the rectories of Mordon in Surrey and Longdon in Worcestershire, the monks set to work to repair the dilapidated nave of the Confessor's church. The receipts from Longdon came to about £26 13s. 4d. yearly and our account of the Guardians of the Temporalities has several references clearly concerned with this revenue which was being farmed by Richard Chirton (or de Cheryngton) and Roger Basset. Thus: "Item in expensis R. Basset et Henr' Withull cum eorum hominibus per ij septimanas circa impetracionis vacacionem xis. viijd.". "In expensis fratris Johannis de Crendon euntis versus Soutton [Sutton-under-Brailes] per preceptum prioris loquend' cum Ricardo Chirton pro ecclesia de Longedon . . . pro denario soluendo

[1] The name is torn away, but Brother Thomas de Wenlok (*Monks of Westminster*, p. 81) was still alive.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 76. [3] *Ibid.*, pp. 81, 211.

[4] Strictly, New Work on the old Nave; they speak of it as "novum opus veteris ecclesie Westm.," *Mun.* 23452.

[5] R. B. Rackham, *Building at Westminster Abbey*, 1298-1348, pp. 270 ff; *Nave of Westminster*, pp. 4 ff.

Episcopo Northwich," 2s. 8¾d. "Item pro expensis eschaetoris Wigorn' et clerici sui et R. Basset et aliorum ijs."

The rent from Longdon, then, went some way towards enabling the Wardens first to repair the nave, and then to proceed to the "new work" on the Cloister, and on this the new Abbot and his colleague had been engaged up to the death of Thomas de Henle,[1] who contributed various sums from time to time. They had five or six masons in their employ and had just got in three shiploads of Caen stone, when Simon de Bircheston's election as Abbot dissolved the partnership. On the back of the roll of their joint work it is stated that they were short of money to the extent of £33 11s. 2d.[2] "Here, unfortunately," says Rackham, "our information ceases." But not quite; for in the account-roll which we have been following throughout this chapter the Guardians of the Temporalities reckon the deficit in question as being among the liabilities of Simon de Bircheston, now Abbot-Elect, and so among the "debita soluta" they include this exact sum: "Item fratri [Johanni] de Mordon pro novo Edificio in claustro xxxiij.li. xjs. ijd.". More than thirty years later John de Mordon was still engaged on the new work; but in less than five years from his election Simon de Bircheston died of the Great Pestilence at Hampstead, leaving the Convent burdened with debt. Another and a greater Simon reigned in his stead and Abbot Langham began his rule by discharging his predecessor's liabilities to the amount of 2200 marks.[3]

In Walter de Wenlok's case we have much less information, though what there is has a certain grim significance. His affairs, we remember, were in the capable hands of

[1] Their compotus (*Mun.* 23453) carries the account up to two days later, 1 November, 1344.

[2] Bircheston repeats the statement in his compotus of Queen Alianore's manors, *Mun.* 23691.

[3] *Redyny's Chronicle* (ed. Tait), p. 108; *Flete* (ed. Robinson), p. 131.

Brother Henry Payn, and in *Mun.* 24260 this monk gives his account from Michaelmas, 1307, to the time of his master's decease, though the words "usque vigiliam Natiuitatis domini anno eodem" appear to have been added in another hand, and the account includes some subsequent payments of high consequence. Here again there has been a great effort to gather in the rents and other dues, and the receipts amount to £337. The expenditure on clothes, doubtless for funeral purposes, was £74, including four ells of russet for the Abbot's palfrey and the same amount of "Blankett" for my lord's body. The funeral, the making of the tomb, and the maintenance of the household for a week after the burial cost £71, and the outstanding fees and pensions to William Ynge, R. de Hegham, Richard de Gloucester, and other Justices, were duly paid off.

But a considerable sum still remained, and it is in their use of it that the executor-monks reveal the state of dissension and of lack of scruple which was possible in Wenlok's epoch. For in Henry Payn's compotus there is mention of the arrival of the Elect in England and of a payment of £2 13s. 4d. to Brother Robert de Beby and one Richard, perhaps for meeting his new lordship at the coast, and this brings us into the presence of Wenlok's successor, Brother Richard de Kedyngton, also called de Sudbury.[1] It also shows us that Henry Payn's compotus was not completed before 26 January, 1308,[2] on which day de Kedyngton was elected Abbot by compromission, being himself, as Walter de Wenlok had been in 1283, one of the electors, of whom there were seven. The issue of this election kept the Convent still in two bitterly divided sections for over two years. The whole dismal story cannot be given here, except in so far as it connects itself with Wenlok. For it can hardly be doubted that in some measure the conflict was a prolongation of the quarrel between our Abbot and his Prior. Kedyngton was the

[1] Cf. *Monks of Westminster*, p. 73. [2] *Mun.* 5424, 5415 (see p. 22),

Wenlokite candidate and Hadham's man, whoever he was, failed to get a majority, with the result that the supporters of the Elect set to work to insure the favour of the Court for their candidate, while the others sent their proctors to the Papal Curia to frustrate the confirmation of the election by every means in their power. And for a long time the latter party were successful. The King, having placed the abbatial revenues in charge of John de Foxle on Wenlok's death, 25 December, 1307, left them there till 25 April, 1310,[1] and all that time de Kedyngton was struggling to establish his position as Abbot.

Anyone who wants to see things from the side of the opponents must labour at *Mun.* 5460, which is a contemporary and very indistinct and difficult transcript of some thirteen vigorous and sometimes violent letters; indeed, it is a very rare event that Abbey documents of this period should thus desert the sober paths of administrative finance in order to stray into the wildest tracts of personal controversy. But those who are surprised have omitted to reckon with that litigious fighter and Hadhamite, Brother Roger de Aldenham, who has already given us more than a taste of his quality. Now, the first of these thirteen letters is from him and it is addressed to "Priori, Henr., Gwydoni, Philippo," the inner circle of the opposition to de Kedyngton. "Priori," of course, means de Hadham, and it is worth notice that de Aldenham has not much faith in the Prior's discretion; "don't produce this letter," he writes, "in the middle of the cloister, as our Prior does". "Henr." is Henry de Bircheston,[2] another friend of Hadham's and one of de Kedyngton's electors, though he evidently voted in the minority. In the course of 1307-8 he and William de Almali found themselves in chains in the King's Palace and the Convent Treasurers paid 3s. 8d. for their fetters.[3] It is not certain that their offence was connected with this quarrel, though

[1] Kal. Pat. Rolls, 1307-13, p. 225; *Mun.* 5435.

[2] Cf. *Monks of Westminster*, p. 71.

[3] *Mun.* 19842; cf. p. 172.

Aldenham implies[1] that their imprisonment was due to Piers Gaveston, but their journey to the Curia is mentioned in these letters[2]: "scitis quod fratres H. de Birchestone et W. de Almali iter vobiscum ad sedem apostolicam arripere proponunt pro sua absolucione in forma juris impetranda et querelis proponendis vt decet et conuenit racioni." Gwydo must be de Asshewelle, also a supporter of Hadham. Philip de Sutton, the Monk-Bailiff, has already been described.[3] The fact that all these letters refer to negotiations at or with the Curia, and that the last of them was "Datum Auignione die sancte trinitatis" (no year) shows that quite in the early days of the "Babylonish Captivity" our monks were busy in the Hall of Audience at the Palace of the Popes.

One or two matters of importance to our subject are cleared up by these vigorous effusions of Roger de Aldenham and his colleague, Brother Walter de Bolton. For them the prevention of this election concerned the common weal of their Convent.[4] On the one side were "Deus et iusticia et status ecclesie sue," and on the other "negocium Abbatis defuncti et Electi". It was a veritable battle for faith and righteousness. "Hope in the Lord," writes Walter de Bolton, "and He will set you free; He sits as a refiner and purifier of silver and He shall purge the sons of Levi." But Aldenham and Bolton were by no means content with these fiery platitudes. They wanted their party in the Convent at home to be up and doing; they insisted that the methods of de Kedyngton's men must be adopted and bettered. The men who were at the back of the Elect—Aldenham mentions, as we should expect, Alexander de Persore, William de Chalk and Henry Payn—have not hesitated to secure the favour of Piers Gaveston for their nominee. Therefore the Prior and his friends must for their part obtain the help of the

[1] *Mun.* 5460 (3). [2] *Mun.* 5466 (11th letter). [3] p. 6.

[4] *Mun.* 5460 (1): "contencio iam diu inter nos pro statu monasterii nostri communi",

Queen, must induce her to write letters to her father, the King of France, and to her brother Charles, asking them to influence the Pope and the Cardinals against the Elect. Also at all costs they must obtain letters to the same effect from the Earl of Lincoln,[1] who is more powerful than any one else in the Kingdom, and is in high favour with the Pope and the French. It can be done, says Aldenham, very simply. Brother Philip and Brother Gwydo need only pretend that they are going a round of the manors for a change of air,[2] and then without arousing suspicion they can call on these local magnates and obtain letters from them. Only do it quickly, adds Aldenham, "pro Jhesu Christo".

Brother Walter de Bolton,[3] is no less insistent. He describes Brother Roger de Bures as having at first wavered and leaned towards the cause of the Elect, but, he adds, "I have so far stiffened him that he would now sooner beg his bread from door to door than desert our cause, which I believe to be righteous before God". So his brethren at home must keep up their courage; in every way their integrity is being maintained and the iniquity of their opponents is a matter of common talk. He goes on to give a description of the way the money goes when one stays at the Avignonese Court. Each day he has to pay tenpence for his horses, and the weekly charge for himself and his companion is two florins; so those at home must consider how the expense is to be met. If he had realised how long he was to be kept there, he would have sold his horses and diminished the costs of residence.

But the burden of complaint in the minds of both these agitating brethren is that Piers Gaveston had been won over by the enemy. For the third letter, which appears to be also from de Aldenham, is an urgent request to the

[1] Henry de Lacy, third Earl; died 1311.

[2] *Mun.* 5460 (1); "ad spaciandum". It would be the more natural, as Philip de Sutton was Monk-Bailiff and Gwydo was Granger.

[3] *Mun.* 5460.

Prior to go with one or two in his train and fall on his knees before Henry de Lacy in his house, and unfold the whole miserable story to him, urging him with tears in their voice,[1] as he honours St. Peter and St. Edward, to succour the afflicted and down-trodden church of Westminster. Tell him, he says, how the late Abbot, knowing that he would be discredited, if his conduct should become known, went over to Piers Gaveston's party and gave him £200 sterling along with innumerable presents. With the result that Gaveston influenced the King against the Prior, who could not succeed in getting audience, while Walter de Wenlok was maintained and supported till his death, against God and the truth. When he died, his party carried the election of their candidate, an illiterate, irreligious and wholly inadequate person of deplorable morals, whom the King himself twice refused to admit to office on account of his bad reputation. Whereupon the Elect and his supporters gathered round Piers Gaveston with a gift of £100 out of Wenlok's residuary estate. Gaveston won the King over to the Elect; letters in his support went off to the Pope and the Cardinals and the French King. And now, says Aldenham, our only hope is in a letter to the latter from the Earl of Lincoln.

Now here is a serious accusation, of which we can to some extent test the truth. The evil character of Richard de Kedyngton is not our concern, though the rumour of it was sufficient to delay the confirmation of his election.[2] Nor are we able to confirm Aldenham's statement that Wenlok in his lifetime gave a bribe of £200 to Gaveston, though we know of other gifts which were sent to the favourite.[3] Aldenham hints that Wenlok laid his hands on the funds of Queen Alianore's foundation; that, at least, I take to be the meaning of his statement: "Abbas iam defunctus Elemosinas domini Regis et totum statum monasterii ita destruxerat et oppresserat". What we

[1] "Humiliter verbis et vocibus lacrimosis"; *Mun.* 5460 (3).
[2] Kal. Pap. Reg., II, 65. [3] p. 97.

can say is that Reginald de Hadham as Prior delivered to the executors of the Queen's Almoner, William de Loriaco, just before Bartlemas, 1311, three coffers and their keys, which had been entrusted to him in the presence of Brother Alexander de Persore, then Archdeacon, and other monks; and that, as the executors gave a full acquittance, all was clearly well with the coffers and their contents.[1]

Nor can we trace the sum of £100 which the Wenlokite brethren are alleged to have handed to Gaveston out of their late master's money, but we can find evidence of the most open kind that large gifts were made, and to obtain it we need go no further than Henry Payn's last compotus as Abbot's Treasurer.[2] As we have already seen, he collected a total sum of £337. But his disbursements amounted to £355, so that a sum of £18 was due to him at the close of his task. As there was nothing over, but rather a deficit, it is obvious that Wenlok's friends cannot have bribed Gaveston by sending him £100 out of the residue.

Nevertheless there are signs here of a certain amount of bribery, some of which must have had Wenlok's sanction, unless he was incapacitated for longer before his death than we believe. For instance, two pieces of silver plate were bought and presented to Edward II on the morrow of his father's funeral in October, 1307, and a sum of £40 was sent with them, while a gilt cup and cover was given to Sir John de Charlton, a courtier attached to Gaveston (no price is entered for this, because it was paid for in the previous account). It is added that these gifts were made "per W. Merre, Magistrum R. de Glouc', fratrem A. de Perschora et fratrem W. de Chalke et alios de consilio domini". We should expect, if all were well, the usual form of authorisation, "per preceptum domini," and the absence of it may well imply that Wenlok's friends were using Wenlok's funds to promote what they believed to be Wenlok's plans. The same may be

[1] *Mun.* 9505. [2] *Mun.* 24260.

true of a smaller gift of ten shillings to one Adam, the clerk of the King's Seneschal, "pro libertatibus domini fauorabilius saluandis," and of one of £2 to the King's Treasurer "per consensum W. Merre et fratris A. de Persore". All that can be ascertained to have gone to Gaveston was a gift of plate—a large cup and goblet and a small cup, all of silver gilt, and costing £10 12s. Brother William de Chalk was sent to Northampton at an expense of £2 in order to present these gifts to the great man in person.

This is all that can be proved. At the worst it may create suspicion that other sums were somehow raised and forwarded to the same influential quarter; but, taken just as it stands, it means that our last glance at this Abbot of strong will and much strife takes in the active efforts of those around him to foster the sectional interests on which he and they had set their heart. Admittedly, Richard de Kedyngton was a man whose personal character was so vulnerable, that no one who loved the Convent should have endeavoured to place him at its head. But, either because Prior Hadham was in favour of some other candidate, or because a long friendship with Alexander de Persore had warped his judgment, Wenlok associated himself to the last with de Kedyngton's supporters. So we might leave him with the sad reflection that his latter years had fomented strife in the House, and that after his death it was still divided. But, even so, there were those who found him lovely and pleasant in his life, and who counted his death a disaster. "The supreme Wisdom that orders all things and now and again mingles laughter with tears has given to the monks of Westminster a bitter cup to drink by taking from their head the venerable father Walter de Wenlok, a pious pastor of that church, a foremost champion of the Rule and Order of St. Benedict; one who secured many benefits and bestowed them freely on his church and his brethren."[1] It must not be for-

[1] *Flor. Hist.*, III, 140.

gotten that these words may have been written by one of his own monks in a corner of the Great Cloister.

Mun. 5415.

In Nomine domini amen. Per presens publicum instrumentum cunctis appareat euidenter quod cum Ecclesia monasterii Westmonasterii . . . fuisset pastoris solacio destituta per mortem bone memorie Dompni Walteri de Wenlok quondam Abbatis monasterii predicti Anno ab Incarnacione domini millesimo ccc^{mo} septimo fratres quoque dicti monasterii in capitulo eiusdem congregati die veneris proxima post festum Conuersionis Sancti Pauli Apostoli videlicet septimo Kalendis Februarii anno supradicto Indictione sexta fratrem Ricardum de Kydyngtone dictum de Sudberi eorum confratrem in Abbatem et pastorem suum elegissent Idem frater Ricardus de Kydingtone electus in presencia mei Notarii publici infrascripti et testium subscriptorum coram fratre Reginaldo de Hadham Priore et toto Conuentu dicti monasterii in loco supradicto presentibus dicto die veneris personaliter constitutus subscriptos articulos vnanimi assensu et consensu totius Conuentus prius compositos ad sacra dei euangelia corporaliter tacto libro et inspecto fideliter firmiter et inuiolabiliter suo perpetuo obseruare iurauit quorum articulorum tenor talis est. Videlicet quod in primis diliget deum ordinem et Religionem suam. Item quod libertates ecclesie Westmonasterii pro posse suo seruabit indempnes. Item quod in Bancho domini Regis Anglie vel alibi pacem sine assensu conuentus non faciet. Item quod in Curia Romana aliquid contra extentam celarii conuentus a domino Rege concessam vel obediencias non impetrabit. Item quod non instituet conuentui priorem nisi per vnanimem consensum totius conuentus nec monachos in congregacionem eorum admittet nec ecclesias alicui conferet nisi in pleno capitulo nec obedienciarios in dispendium conuentus inuito conuentu amouebit.

[Tested by John de Spaldewike and William Dorterer, notaries public, the same day (26 Jan., 1308) and place.]

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